

WILFULL
IMPENITENCY
The Groſſeſt
SELF-MURDER.

All they who are guilty of it, apprehended, tryed and condemned
in theſe SERMONS.

PREACHED
At *Rochford* in *Effex*, by that able, faithfull,
and laborious Miniſter of JESUS CHRIST,
M^r WILLIAM FENNER B.D.
not long before his death.

Made Publick
By one of his unworthy Fellow-Labourers.

PROV. 1. 24, 25, 26. *Because I have called, and ye have refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded: But ye have set at nought all my counsell, and would none of my reproof, I will also laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.*

JOHN 5. 40, 41. *And ye will not come to me that ye might have life. I am come in my Fathers Name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive.*

Velle meum Domine misericordiæ tale est de redeundo ad te, quale est velle tuum de mea ad te reversione. *Gul. Paris. de Rhet. Div. c. 14.*

Quid agit liberum arbitrium? Breviter respondeo, salvatur. *Bern. de Lib. Arb. & Gr.*

Non velle in causa est, non posse pretenditur. *Sen.*

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ST. PAUL, MINN.

1891

To the right Honourable

ROBERT RICH

BARON of *Lees in Essex*, and

EARL of *Warwick*, Abundance

of Spirituall blessings in

Iesus Christ.

Paul being upon a propheticall wing
(for the Lord had poured upon him,
not onely an Apostolicall, but a
Propheticall spirit) doth foretell
in the 2. Tim. 3. 1. That in the last dayes peri-
lous times shall come; those who are full of
carnall self-love and unthankfulness, will much
increase the danger of this last age of the world
(the Lord root up all such weeds out of our
hearts.)

*This know
also (saith
he,) there's
the infalli-
ble certain-
ty of it.*

God hath, I hope, given Your Honour such
a measure of love to the Publick, and so active
a spirit to doe good to others, as will help to les-
sen the danger of these evill times. And
I would be so thankfull for favours received,
that

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that I might be ranked among this dishonourable Catalogue which here *Paul* sums up, of such as make bad times worse.

It is your Honours happiness and advantage (as it was once said of the *Duke of Guise* in France, that he did put obligations upon all) that you can engage very many; and amongst the rest, I must ever acknowledg my self one, who in one of the greatest turnings of my life, by the good hand of God upon me in your free consent and Noble bounty, have had so much comfort in the nearest and dearest relation, that I never envied any other, but find matter of everlasting praises to God for his goodness to my self therein. And being under so great obligations, when I can produce nothing of my own worthy your acceptance; I take leave to act the part of a Midwife to this happy Birth, w^{ch} may call your Honour Father, as will appear by the following Letter, that it was ultimately intended for your spirituall advantage; and it were now a kind of sacriledg to keep that holy issue from you, that is so much your own. It joyes the souls of me and many more of your praying servants, that they have so much

Pro. 30. 10
11, 12, &c.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

much occasion to praise their God on your behalf, for so many able and faithfull Ministers of the Gospell of the first, second, and third magnitude, that your prudent, fatherly care hath fixed, where you as Patron, have been trusted.

Oh the many Chariots and Horsemen of Israel, that your Noble Father and you have brought triumphantly into Essex (herem you did happily Patrizare) the Lord continue the like care to build and repair his house in those who survive you, from Generation to Generation, that so your House may still be honourably supported.

Ecclesiasticall Story speaks of one *Henrichs Auceps*, when he did fight against the Hungarians, made this vow to God, That if the Lord would give him victory against his Enemy, he would purge his Country from Symony, which at that time mightily abounded therein. We want men of such an heroicall zealous disposition in England.

Oh that all Patrons were more mindfull of their high trust, then they would not so often betray the souls of people by putting off a friend, &c. with a Living to some unworthy
Chap-

Vide Simpson.
son. Ecclef.
Hist. lib. 3.
Gen. 10.

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1 Pet. 4. 5.

Note.

* There are many of great reading, who wil undertake to make it appear, that as Heathenish feasts, Bacchanalia & Saturnalia, &c. were turned into Christmas and such other feasts, hoping thereby to win Heathens to Christ; so were Archi-flamens & Flam-ueschang'd into Arch-prelats and prelates, out of a good intention. Lu. 10. 42.

Chaplain. Doubles, there is many a damn'd creature roaring in Hell, cursing covetous Patrons, as well as unfaithfull Pastors. For whose Blood (in part at least) they must be accountable to the Father of spirits and Judge of the quick and the dead. A most heavy reckoning, when the sins of so many Congregations, to which Patrons are accessary by sending ignorant and scandalous Ministers amongst them, are made theirs; whereas the least of their own sins unrepented of will sinke them eternally.

God who is faithful, wil not forget your labour and cost of love to the truly Reverend man of God Mr. Hooker (who is now singing Hallelujahs in heavenly Mansions) when he was persecuted by the * Archi-flamen of Cant. He wil pay abundantly for protecting and nursing his children, Heb. 6. 10.

I know not how better to expresse my deep sense of your most real favour (the comfort whereof I daily enjoy) then by taking the humble boldness to beseech your Honor to add one thing more, which indeed is the *unum necessarium*, whereby you wil gain that better part which shall not be taken from you; namely, that you would study and pray, that you may walk

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walk in the light & heat of that glorious Gospel constellation (for Ministers are Stars, and the Angels of the Churches) which you have endeavored to fix in Your Orb. Your Honor hath been often at Sea, and there beholding the wonders of God in the deep, have been taught to wrestle with him for mercy. It is an old saying, *He that would learn to pray, let him go to sea.* Besiege heaven with your unwearied importunities, that the Ark of the Gospel, which you have provided for thousands, may be your own everlasting Sanctuary. And that you feasting upon their dainties, may be fat and flourishing in your last dayes; standing stedfast in these shaking times, and immovable, keeping faith and a good conscience, (which too many having put away, concerning faith, have made shipwrack) more and more abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

This, through the grace of Christ, shall be
the earnest prayer of him who is

(My Lord)

Your Honour's most obliged Servant,

THOMAS HILL.

Rev. 1. 20.
& 2. 1.

* So acknowledged by the Translators in the contents of Revel. 2. They, it seems, did not think these Angels to be Prelates.

Qui nescit orare, discat navigare. Jon. 1. 5

Phi. 2. 9, 14

1 Ti. 1. 19.

1 Cor. 15. last.

To the Right Worshipful

My much Honoured Friend,

S^r NATHANIEL RICH.

I Have been often thinking what to send you; at last this Theme which I have lately treated of in the Pulpit came into my mind: It's of infinite use and necessity, and a Truth little examined, considered, or laid to heart; yet ~~marvellous~~ necessary for humiliation to all the children of God, and of great weight for the making the world guilty before God. I had thought to have sent it to my Lord of Warwick for his subscribe hours: and if you judge it profitable, after your perusal of it, to commit it unto him from me, you shall do well. I am sorry to hear of such a Worthy's sickness or weakness: Now Elisha the man of God was fallen sick: the very words are able to strike thorow. The Lord lend you health, and strength, and peace, and comfort, and joy: It is not onely matter of courtesie to pray for such as you are, but of debt; and our necessities and duties call for it, and mine more especially. The Lord be mercifull to me, and to many in raising you up, and make you plenus dierum, and serus in cœlum redire: That's all the hurt that I wish you; and so I commend you to the word of his power that is able to keep you, and rest

Yours in the Lord JESUS,

WILLIAM FENNER.



To the Christian Reader, who de-
sireth to hold fast the form of sound
words in faith and love, which is in

Christ: Jesus, and to advance Free-
Grace above Free will.

Most admirably wise and fatherly hath
been the Lords care of his Churches
in all ages; and when there were false
Prophets under the old Testament,
the Lord had his Jeremiahs to confute them, whom
he made a defenced City, an Iron pillar, and
brazen wals against all opposition. When the Divell
stirred up Hymeneus, Philetus, and others, to un-
dermine the truths of the Gospel in the times of the
new Testament; The Lord raised and accomplished
his Pauls to confound them also. You shall find
when the Churches of Christ are in a wilderness
condition, and the Serpent casts out of his mouth
waters as a floud after the woman, that is, multitudes
of unsound and Hereticall opinions, the earth hel-
ped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swal-
lowed the floud which the Dragon cast out of his
mouth: that is, Jesus Christ had those here that
did encounter and overthrow all false Doctrine, with
which the Divell by his agents endeavoured to poison
and destroy the Churches. Besides the four generall
Councells, namely, that of Nice, when Arius a
Presbyter of Alexandria denying that the Son of

A

God

Jer. 1. 18.

1 Tim. 1. 20.

Rev. 12. 15.
16.

See learned
Mr. Mead his
excellency Book
on the place.

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1 About A.D.
330. under
Constantine the
great, viñ.

2 About A.D.
383. under
Theodosius.

3 About A.D.
490. under
Theodosius the
second, not
Isorox, but
Xisox.
About A.D.
456. under
Marrianus,
Calcedon.

Cent. 3.

Cent. 4.

Cent. 5.

God was consubstantiall with the Father, and that there was a time when he was not, was confuted, and truth obtained a victory there, God stirring up many learned men to oppose him.

And in the second, that of Constantinople, when there was a Macedonius who called the Holy Ghost a creature, many were able by the power of truth to confound him.

And the third, when a Nestorius, who denyed that the Virgin Mary could be called the mother of God, providence ordered it so, that then a Councell of learned Bishops and Elders at Ephesus should blast that opinion. And when an Eutiches (who in a different way from Nestorius, who denyed the personall Union of two Natures in Christ) would have the immensity of the Divine nature in Christ, that there was onely the Divine nature in him, another Councell at Calcedon overthrew him.

God had variety of champions to contest with the most subtil and prevailing adversaries, from hand to hand; particularly when there was Manes and Manichæi, who rejected the old Testament, and affirmed that man fell not by voluntary defection, but of necessity, because mans body was made of the prince of darkness (wherewith Austin was leavened before his conversion,) The Lord had Chrysostome and others to hinder the spreading and prevailing of it.

When there was an Arrius, who denied the Divinity of Christ, there should be an Athanasius raised to overthrow him.

When a Macedonius to oppose the holy Ghost, then a Basil to break him.

When

To the Christian Reader.

When a Pelagius to advance Free-will into the Throne of Free-grace, then God would raise up an Austin, (that great light of the Church in his time) to depose that, & to restore this to its crown & dignity.

This Pelagius was born in Britain the same day that Austin in Affrick; he was the first presumptuous Advancer of the pride of Free-will. Hee did not thinke the grace of God to be necessary for the helping of Free-will for good things in every act. This was condemned in the Councell of Carthage, wherein indeed to save himself he did equivocate in the word grace, acknowledging a naturall, an exciting, and after conversion an assisting grace. This Doctrine was likewise condemned in the Synod of Palestina 1200 years ago, and therein Arminianism kild before it was born, by the strength of that place, 2 Tim. 1.9.

This Pelagius had his Scholers, Julianus and Caestinus; Jesus Christ would not then leave Austin without some Disciples to conflict with those (as Chrysostome had his Oecumenius, and Theophilast his Pedissequi, his followers) so was there a Prosper, and Hilary Arelatensis to encounter the old Massilians, and Semipelagians in France..

And when there was a Faustus Regiensis (a most subtilt adversary) a Bishop who did closely defend Pelagianism in two Books of Free-will; The Church should have a Fulgentius, and Petrus Diaconus, & others to oppose him. Yea, sentence was then given against Pealgus and Semi-pelagians, in the council of Orange. In the general, that their opinions touching free-will & free-grace, were not agreeable to the Catholick faith.

Demystrus ex Walsida refert eodem die quo ille in Anglia natus, tenebras errorum toti mundo effundis, summum Ecclesie lumen Augustinum in Africa emicuisse: About An.D.418.

Note.

Damnata antequam nata Arminii opinio.

Vide learned ArchBishop's most excellent Discourse of Free-will, in his Answer to the Jesuites Challenge.

About An. D. 429.

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Further, about the Yeer 850, one Johannes Scotus (not he which wrote upon the Sentences with so much opposition against Thomas Aquinas, but another) wrote a Book against Predestination, which the Church of Lyons confuted with a godly and learned Book.

One Godescalcus, a man of the Low-Countries, is reckoned in the number of this age, about the yeer of our Lord 849, because he spake of Predestination perilously, to wit, That those who were predestinated to life by the decree of Gods predestination, were forced to do well: and those who were predestinated to condemnation, were forced by the decree of God to do evill: but he was resisted by Hincmarus and other learned men.

This infectious error Pelagianisme spread into England, where it was apt to take the deeper rooting, because Pelagius himself by birth was a Brittan: But the Lord raised learned Bradwardine, Arch-bishop of Canterbury and some others to appear in the cause of God, and of Free-grace, and to fortifie the Churches against all the Pelagians, whom Augustin calls Inimicos gratiae Dei; and Fulgentius, Vasa Irae Dei.

Afterwards the subtilty of the Serpent insinuated himself into the Garden of the Church by the wit and learning of Faustus Socinus (another infautus Faustus in Poland.) They who have opportunity to consult Socinus books de Ministerio, and the Catechismus Cracoviensis (a most subtil and dangerous book) shall finde the seeds of Arminianisme, their Helena, sc. Media Scientia (however Molina and other

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ther Popish Authours contend, as once the seven Cities did whose Homer was there to be conceived. They will grant a Divina Præscientia, but deny decretum Divinum to pass upon all things, leaving the will to it self to produce its own acts, which indeed is no less then a degree of Atheism, setting up the second cause into the Throne of the first. Herein, and in divers other things the Arminians do tread in their steps, as wil appear to those who examine Peltzius his book, the Harmony of the Socinian and Arminians Doctrine. I wish that book were in English, it would make many blasse now adazes to see how Inco-
 gitantly (I hope that is the worst in many) they have run themselves into the Tents of Socinians and Arminians, and know not how honourably to retreat.

About the year 1570, when Petrus Baro a French man, had infected Cambridg with that disease from France, (you see spirituall as well as bodily evils have come from France) and one Mr. Barret, who acted concurrently with him. Then God giving the Heads of Colledges with the Vice-chancellor a prudent Zeal to oppose it, they sent up Dr. Tindall and Dr. Whitaker to complain to Arch-Bishop Whitgift, which begot that usefull Book of Articuli Lambethani.*

The Leaven came then into the Netherlands, and (as learned King James saith) Arminius was the first that infected Leyden with the Pelagian

Peltzius his
 harmony of
 Socin. and Ar-
 min.
 Note.

Vide M. Pryn's
 Antiarmin.

* Soon after
 this journey,
 Dr. Whitakers
 blessed soul re-
 turned to her
 eternal rest, ha-
 ving not long
 before in an

admirable concio ad Clerum, (rightly called his Cygnat Concio) discovered and confuted the chiefe points of Arminianism therein.

Herefie.

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† Pelagianisme
oft called He-
refis. Vide Dr.
Featly's preface
to his Pelag.
Red. Vid. Ames-
caj. Consc. Fu-
nius et Perkins;
Whoboth were
in a year.

Hereſie †. He was a ſtrong, and clear parted man; and as it is ſaid of Origen, Ubi bene, nemo melius; ubi malè, nemo pejus: ſo there are ſome excellent diſcourſes in his Works, and others as deſperately oppoſite to the Covenant of Grace, ſhattering all the links of the golden chaine of our ſalvation, which is the great evill of Arminianiſm. From a young Student, Junius preſaged of him, that he would be a very uſefull, or moſt pernicious inſtrument in the Church of Chriſt. By this Junius (when the Lord had converted him from Atheiſme, by reading the begining of the firſt Chapter of the Goſpell of John, wherein he ſaw ſuch majeſty, that he thought that the Lord did therein detonare ab alto) the Lord gave a ſovereign antidote to his Church in thoſe parts, againſt the infection of Arminianiſme. As about the ſame time, by that glorious light, Maſter Perkins in England, whom the Lord made a malleus both of Papiſts and Arminians, and by more clear and condeſcending diſcoveries of Chriſt, made the deep myſteries of ſpeculative, and the heavenly ſecrets of practi- call Divinity, to meet in the Pulpit; and all this in a little time; (for he lived but about 44 Years, being born (in fullow) in the firſt, and dyed in the laſt of Queen Elizabeths reign. Oh, how much did he in a little time!

But ſtill the Divell will be caſting weeds in- to Chriſts garden, picking up thoſe that have been rooted out, and throwing them over the wall a- gain.

Now he made uſe of Barnevelt in Holland, to bring

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bring Religion to serve State purposes, And so carried on the Arminian designe there. These differences about the power of Free-will, and such things as hang upon that (for there is the primum movens) now came to be reduced to five Articles, which begate the conference at Hague, betwixt both parties; which is reported both by Brandius, and Bertius.

About this time came up the name of Remonstrants, as the name Protestant had formerly. Whereupon Dr. Ames (once Fellow of Christs Colledg in Cambridg, but in Doctor Carey's time then Master of that place, it grew too hot for him, he not complying with the present Ceremonies, and having Preached a Sermon at the University Church against playing at Cards, which would not then be born) was by the disposing hand of Divine providence carryed into those parts, where (as the Austine of that time and place) he did grapple with all the Patrons of Free-will. And as an Appendix to that conference at Hague, (as it is set forth by Brandius) wrote that excellent book of his Coronis. But still Arminius his disciples acted to their utmost; Bertius, Grevinconius, and others so distracted those Churches, that there was a necessity of calling a Synod, which God gave them as a happy remedy, An. Dom. 1618.

Oh the unwearied activity of adversaries to the cause of Christ (which should make others blush to move so heavily in asserting the Doctrine of Free-

As the name Protestant was given first to the princes free Cities of Germany that sought Reformation in the Diet at Spiro, An. D. 1529. and from them passed to us and other Countries where it was effected.

Synod of Dort, A-D. 1618.

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Free-grace) before we could understand what the Antiremonstrants in the Synod at Dort fully intended, we had from the Remonstrants Acta Synodalia; a Book indeed that required an Armes to answer it (which hee hath done most learnedly) where you have Magnum in Parvo; a great soul in a little body; a great deal of form in a little matter (as in his Bellarminus enervatus:) that being done by the Fraternity, with concurrent indeavours, and the quintessence of the best wits amongst the Remonstrants.

About the Yeer 1627 Mr. Montague, a man of great learning, and being backed by the then Duke of Buckingham, opened his Arminian (and I had almost said Popish) pack, when the Lord used Bishop Carleton, Doctor Featly, Doctor Preston and others, as happy instruments to discover his adulterate wares. Lately there sprung up a new brood of such as did assert Arminianisme, as Dutch Tompion Fellow of Clare-Hall, Master William Channel Fellow of Christs Colledge (as the many Pupils that were Arminianized under his tuition doth show; whether by him or no he best knows:) but men are more confirmed in their suspicion hereof, since they heard of his answerable actings in the University in Ireland. But still, as in Oxford, when there was any danger of spreading Arminianism, whether in Acts, Books, or Sermons, they had there Robert Abbot, Twisse, Prideaux, and other Works to suppress them; So in Cambridge, God gave us lately Davenant and Ward, who did victoriously enter the lists with the most

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most confident adversaries of Free-grace. And that bitter weed could never take deepe rooting in any of these three kingdoms, and thrive very fruitfully. There was in Ireland a most learned Arch-Bishop Usher to crush it there. And a mighty man in these Controversies, Doctor Twisse (another Austine) to suppress it in England. As learned and industrious Mr. Rutherford and others have done their parts successively in Scotland. But alas, Arminius now appears amongst us, not so much in the Schooles and Pulpits, as in popular meetings.

For, as Lanchius complained with much regret of the Lutheran Ubiquitaries, that he found them ubiquitous, every where to vex and molest him; so may we grieve, (O that we could with brokenness of heart bewaile it) that our Universalists are almost universally spread amongst us: It is gotten into our Netherlands, much into the fennish and moorish parts of this kingdom, yea amongst many people that love Jesus Christ, and therefore entertain it, as conceiving it most for his Honour (the more they are to be pitted, and to be instructed with a spirit of meekness; shew them by Scripture evidence this is not Gods way of advancing Christ, and you recover them) it is now in popular hands, we need such worthies as the Author of this following Treatise (blessed be the Father of mercy, the Fountaine of every good and perfect gift, for his and many others fruitfull labours) who may condescend to parley with poor Christians at their Tables, in their shops, to follow them at the plow (as Reverend Mr. Green-

Who were a-
stra prima mag-
nitudine.

2. Tim. 2. 24.

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ham was wont to do) endeavouring to rectifie and reduce them.

Ἡ σοφία αὐτοῦ,
non ὁ γυμνασ-
μὸς.

He knew how to deale wisely with subtile adversaries, that he might have the more advantage against them; grants them as much as he could with consistency to his owne principles, that so he might the more easily confound theirs; onely you will be so candid as to consider that herein he speaks ad populum; and therefore as the ancient Fathers, often useth the liberty of speaking like a Preacher, rather then as a Doctor of the Chaire.

Jes. 17. 9.

Note.

I reckon this a very strong argument to confute the power of Free-will to any spirituall action in a gracious manner, the wofull experience of mine owne wretched heart, being naturally so desperately wicked, opposite to any spirituall good; But this will not convince others (onely by the way I would know how it comes to passe, if Arminius his Doctrine be true, that we have Free-will to choose that which is truly good, why Arminians are not all very good men? Will not this be an aggravation against them at the dreadfull day of judgement?)

Ecclef. 12. 11.

Therefore the Lord is most admirably gracious in giving us such Masters of the Assemblies to fasten such Scripture truths as may hold us fast and close under the Covenant of Grace.

John 5. 35

He was a blessing to the Colledg where hee was fellow, of Pembroke Hall in Cambridge (which hath been a fruitfull nursery to this Church, and an ornament to the University) and after a burning and shining light in Staffordshire; Hee delighted much in Preaching in an Evangelicall way,

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way, from place to place, as pitying many poor pining seduced soules under blind and superstitious Ministers. The Lord fill their hearts with compassion to them, who have power in their hands to supply them, that so millions do not perish for want of vision.

Afterwards the noble Earl of Warwick fixed him at Rochford in Essex, where he did speak and do great things to the honor of Free-grace; He lived there more by acting vigorously to his great Lord and Master Jesus Christ, in a few years, then most of us his Brethren do in many.

O that we who are left behinde in these conflicting times, could more punctually and closely follow his example; It is not studying the groundlesse fopperies of Popery, nor the immersing our minds wholly into some dry disputes concerning some externalls and formes about Religion, (as too many do now a dayes, being engaged in a party) that will spirituallize us or our hearts so much as Studying and Preaching over the Covenant of Grace; The mysterious and heavenly secrets of the Gospell rightly opened and wisely applied, will by Gods blessing breed a Gospell spirit in thee, leave a gracious tincture upon the spirits of Teachers and Hearers; whereas possibly for want of this, there may be a legall tartnesse and severity in the Spirits and Tongues of able and good men.

The gracious and powerfull Lord who onely teacheth to profit, annoynt all his Saints with that holy unction that they may be able to discern

It is not enough loqui magna, unless we do magna vivere, as Eras.

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cern of things that differ, clearly to distinguish
betwixt truth and error. And that he may to
this and other happy purposes, blesse abundantly
this savourly acute and solid Treatise, shall be the
earnest Prayer of him,

Who is thine in and for
the Lord Jesus.

THOMAS HILL.

A

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1	Demon.	Every wicked man doth imagine more cannots, then there be	ibid
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			A

The Table:

<i>A slothfull man turns his very abilities into cannots,</i>	p.29	3
<i>He doth voluntarily nail himself unto cannots,</i>	ibid	4
<i>He putteth forth by halves that power which he hath,</i>	p.30	5
<i>There is more in a wicked man then by reason of sluggishness</i>	p.31	Conclusi.
Six arguments to prove this.		
<i>Its a signe it is in him</i>	ibid	
<i>Because when God doth convert a sinner, he doth not put in new powers and faculties into the soul,</i>	ibid.	I. Argu.
<i>Because he can shew as great power otherwise,</i>	p.32	2
<i>Because he can shew it too when he list</i>	p.33	3
<i>Because the rod is able to whip it out of him,</i>	ibid.	4
<i>Because he can do an hundred times more when he is pleased</i>	p.34	5
<i>Because he will shew it in Hell, viz. That it was in him to do more then he did</i>	p.35	6
<i>A wicked man will not set himself to use all the means that he may,</i>	p.38	3 Ground.
<i>A wicked man may use the means that God hath appointed as means</i>	p.40	Demonst.
<i>Because 'tis the very nature of means to come between ones can and his cannot</i>	ibid.	I. Argu.
<i>Because God doth not exhort man like a company of stocks and stones, but as men that are edifiable by his word,</i>	p.41	2
<i>Because Gods anger is very reasonable,</i>	ibid	3
<i>Because Gods offer of his kingdome to the wicked is serious</i>	p.42	4
<i>Because Gods reprooves are very equall</i>	p.43	5
<i>His condemnation must be wilfull, that will not use all the means</i>	p.44	Conclusi.
Proved by three Arguments.		
<i>God will not help that man by a miracle to go, that hath legs to go, and will not</i>	ibid.	I Argu.
<i>God will not bate a farthing of the price he sets thee at,</i>	p.45	2
	God	

The Table.

3	God will never be brought out of his walk to shew thee any mercy, or give thee any grace.	p.46
Conclus.	Gods Kingdome cannot be obtained without a diligent use of the means.	p.48
	Reasons of it.	
1 Reas.	Because heaven is an end, and an end can never be gotten without means,	ibid.
2	God hath annexed it to the means,	ibid.
3	Every soul must give an account before God how he hath used the means,	ibid.
4	God will not set up another door into heaven for any man in the world,	p.49
	Further proofes, and encouragements to use the means.	
1	Some of the means that God hath appointed, you may do them without labour,	p.49
2	Some of the means that God hath appointed are easier then them,	ibid.
3	Some of the means are easier yet,	p.50
4	Some of the means of grace, its harder to omit them then to use them,	ibid.
	Some of the means of grace, be they hard, yet they are but hard, they are not impossible for you to use,	ibid.
	Objections.	
1 Object.	The first Objections drawn from the Scriptures, which say they cannot,	p.51
Ans.	The Scripture Speaks of five cannots, 1. Of a naturall cannot. 2. Of a deliberate cannot. 3. Of a judicall cannot. 4. Of a compounded cannot. 5. of a humbling cannot, p.51. &c.	
Object.	Thou wouldst (as thou pretendest) but thou canst not. Perhaps its the will of thy consciencer, and not the will of thy heart. 2. May be its a copulative will, Repentance and some lust, godlines and some lust. 3. May be thou hast a woulding will, this is no will but onely a velleity. 4. May be thou hast a generall Metaphysicall wil; but to come to particulars, there thou wilt not. 5. Thou hast no true will, because if thou didst will, thou couldst.	p.55. &c.
Ans.	Thou	

The Table.

Thou desirest to do it, but art not able, who can tell best what is in thee, God or thine own heart?

But the reason of this mistake is, 1. Thou hast putative or thinking desires, thou thinkest thou desirest. 2. Thou hast ignorant desires. 3. Thou hast wandering desires, and therefore thou art mistaken,

p. 59

Thou resolvest and hast good purposes, but oh thou canst not perform them.

p. 61

These purposes thou speakest of are only willings for the future. 1. Because its only to shuffle off the willing for the present. 2. The will for hereafter is no will, because it goes without Gods. 3. It is no will, because thou shalt misse those suppositions that thou willest upon.

p. 62

First, thou supposest thou shalt have fewer temptations hereafter. 2. Thou supposest thou shalt be fitter hereafter. 3. Thy will for hereafter is no will, but a mockery,

ibid.

Thou labourest to serve God and to be saved.

Is it this labour for grace and heaven, when thou labourest so idely? wherefore thy impenitency is wilfull, thy damnation wilful, and thy ruine wilfull.

p. 62

Hence also it folowes, 1. That your destruction is from selfe. 2. Your destruction is just. 3. Your destruction is inexcusable. 4. Your destruction is unavoidable. 5. Your destruction is pittiable. 6. Your destruction is grievous,

p. 63

Application.

Thou canst never be humbled unless thou beleive this truth; a man is never humbled as long as he excuses himself.

p. 64

Now First, thou excuseth thy self for all Transgressions, besides original,

ibid.

Now thou excuseth thy self from originall sin too; Lord I would be without sin, but I cannot,

p. 65

Nay, thou excuseth thy selfe for every sin: thou takest all thy sins to be nothing but infirmities,

p. 66

Nay, thou commendest thy self more then God,

ibid.

b

Nay

3 Object.

Answer.

4 Object.

Answer.

5 Object.

Answer.

Use 1.

Of Instruction.

1 Excuse.

2 Excuse.

3 Excuse.

4 Excuse.

The Table.

5 Excuse.	Nay, thou canst not so much as pray to God for a will; thou art so proud that thou conceivest thou hast that already,	p.67
6 Excuse.	Nay, thou layst all the blame upon God,	p.68
1 Demon.	First, because thou castest the blame upon nature; Its my nature, and I cannot,	ibid.
2 Demon.	Secondly, thou dost cast the blame upon temptations; Its my hard hap to fall upon temptations,	p.69
3 Demon.	Thirdly, thou layst the blame upon the times; the times are very bad,	ibid.
4 Demon.	Fourthly, thou layest the blame upon this Commandment, If it were any commandment but this I would do it.	p.70
5 Demon.	Fifthly, thou layst the blame upon ill fortune, and bad luck,	ibid.
6 Demon.	Nay sixthly, thou findest fault with all Gods proceedings,	p.71
Use 2.	This discovers the deceitfulness of thy heart, First, thou wouldst very fain, if God would enable, thee : but thy heart does but here lie unto God	p.72 ibid.
	Secondly, hereby thou dodgest with God; and temptest the Lord,	p.73
	Thirdly, hereby thou shufflest off the word, when thou hast heard it,	ibid.
Use 3.	This point calls for great humiliation; for 1 Here lies especially the pride of the heart not in mens can- nots, but their will nots;	p.74 ibid
	2 Here lies especially the hardning of the hart,	p.75
	3 Here lies especially the stubbornnes of the hart,	ibid
	4 Here lies the greatest despising of the Commandments of God,	p.76
Use 4.	To quicken the thankfulness of the godly,	ibid.
Use 5.	A seasonable Item to all Rebellious spirits,	p.77
1 Confid.	1 Is it not enough that thou hast willingly sden in Adam, but thou must willingly stand out again,	p.77
2 Confid.	2 Consider the very Saints of God that have not halfe so many will-nots as you, that stick more cruelly at a cannot	

The Table.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>cannot,
 3. Consider the more shamefull one sin is, the more reason to be humbled.
 Nay fourthly consider there is no greater shame then to make away ones selfe,
 5 Consider if you would but vex your own soule with this serious consideration, it would make you kick your lusts under foot,</p> | <p>ibid.
 3 Confid.
 ibid.
 4 Confid.
 ibid.
 5 Confid.
 ibid.</p> |
|---|--|

The danger of base Pleas and Pretences.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 This same pleading is the cause why you are lazy and idle in the use of the means, viz. because you suffer your hearts to plead, oh we can not do it,
 2 This same pleading brings up an evill report upon piety and godliness,
 3 This same pleading is a murmuring against God, q. d. why does God give me such commandements that I cannot observe?
 4 This is the sawciest excuse of all excuses,
 Nay fifthly, here lies the reason why Divines say that the conversion of a sinner is an harder work then the creation of heaven and earth. First because,
 Here is the same difficulty that was in creation, for God makes a Convert of nothing,
 As there was nothing praexistent in the creation to help, so there was nothing to resist; but here is something to resist, the will it resisteth,</p> | <p>p.79
 ibid
 p.80
 ibid.
 p.81
 ibid
 1 Reaf.
 2
 p.82</p> |
|---|--|

The danger of sticking at a will-not is further cleared.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 If you will not, Gods Ministers have discharged their duties, and have left your blood on your own hands,
 2 If you will not, the Gospel hath delivered its errand, ye are guilty of your own everlasting perdition,
 Nay thirdly, if you will not, The blood of Jesus Christ hath done that it came for,
 4 If you will not, you murder your own soules,</p> | <p>p.83
 p.84
 ibid.
 p.85
 A</p> |
|--|---|

The Table.

Use.

- A reasonable Item to the redeemed of the Lord, that they
 take heed of wil-nots, for p.86
 1. We never sin against Gospel, but only upon wil-nots, ibid
 2. We never despise God, but only upon wil-nots, p.87
 3. Conscience can never condemn us but only upon will-nots,
 ibid.
 4. God can never be angry with us, but only upon will-nots,
 ibid.

The end of the Table.

WIL-

WILFUL
 IMPENITENCY
The Grosslest
 SELF--MURDER.

EZEK. 18. 31, 32.

For why will ye die, O ye House of Israel? &c.

THE wicked in this Chapter dispute against God; The fathers have eaten sour Grapes, and the childrens teeth are set on edge. Our Fathers have sinned, and we are punished: a common cavill in every naturall mans heart, when it's urged. Adam fell, and his poor Posterity smart for it: If God will needs damn us, he may, we have no power for to help it: for *Who hath resisted his will?* This is mans Syllogism. God, who might send man to hell for answer, answers calmly:

1. By *abjuration*; As I live, saith the Lord, ye shall not have occasion to use this Proverb any more in Israel: verse 3.

2. By an *Affertion*: The soul that sinneth, it shall die, ver. 4. No soul shall die but only the same that doth sin.

3. By *explication of himself*: If a man do that which is right, he shall live, ver. 5, 6. If he have been never so wicked, yet if he return, he shall not die, ver. 21.

C

4. By

The Division
 of the Text.

Gods calm an-
 swer to their
 forward cavils,
 In particulars.

4. By appealing to their consciences : *Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord, and not that he should return and live ? ver. 23. Have I any pleasure ? I appeal to all your consciences, Have I any pleasure at all, that the wicked should die?*

5. By retorting : *Hear now, O house of Israel, Is not my way equall ? or, Are not your wayes rather unequall ? ver. 25.*

6. By a conclusion : *Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his wayes, ver. 30.*

7. By a finall decision of the whole Controversie : *Repent and turn your selves, &c. so iniquity shall not be your ruine : Cast away from you all, &c. For why will ye die, &c.*

Four things
very observable.

Where we have these foure things.

1. God disclaims all cause of their damnation from his secret will : *I have no pleasure in the death of him that dyeth.*

2. He removes all cause of their destruction from his revealed will ; *Repent and turn your selves, &c. so iniquity shall not be your ruine ; Cast away, &c.*

3. He disavows all cause of their destruction from his permissive will, as though that were guilty, or accessory to it ; they can have no colour why they are not wrought upon : *Make you a new heart, and a new spirit : Make ; The fault lies not at his door ; no, it lies at your door, Make you a new heart.*

4. He casts all the cause of their destruction upon their own rebellious wils. *Why will ye die, O house of Israel ?*

1. What is the cause you live in your sins, and die, and perish in your sins ? is it because I am not mercifull ? you know I am gracious, and full of mercy, and ready to forgive ; why then, *why will ye die, O house of Israel ?*

2. Is it because I am swift to revenge ? you know I am slow to anger, and give you a warning before I consume you ; why then *will ye die, O house of Israel ?*

3. Is it because I will destroy you for Ahab, or Manasse,

Israels perdition
not from
God, but from
it self.

nasser, or Zedekiabs, or Adams sin, quasi canis peccatum suum dependeret? you know that if the son walk not in the fathers sin, I use to receive him, you can bear me witnesse; I call you to a new covenant: Why then will ye die, O house of Israel?

4. Is it because ye have no Saviour? you know that the Lamb of God, Christ Jesus was slain for you from the beginning of the world, that you may be saved upon faith.

5. Is it because ye have no power? ye know I offer you grace and power, and ye will not have it: Why then will ye die?

6. Some Authours alledge five why's more. Why will ye, &c. Is it for this cause, or that cause, or that? or what cause is it? No cause on Gods side; no, ye may thank your own wills if you perish; this, this only accuseth you, you will not be ruled: you are carelesse of God, Christ, Grace, and you will be so; ye are vain, and carnall, and obstinate, and ye will be so; Wo unto thee, O Jerusalem; wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once be? Jer. 13. 27. He does not say, Wo unto thee Jerusalem, canst thou not be made clean? but wilt thou not be made clean?

Presuppositions not to be mistaken.

1. Its true, that a wicked man cannot repent, nor be converted of himself; but this cannot, do's not hinder him. If a wicked mans cannot did hinder him, he might excuse himself before the Tribunnall of Christ; Lord, thou knowest I did my best, I would have been ruled by thy word, but I could not; I would have been humbled and reformed better then I was, but I could not: If a wicked mans cannot, did hinder him, he might excuse himself thus: But alas, he is not able to say thus, without peremptory lying; Lord, I could not chuse but do wickedly: I acted most wretchedly, but I could not otherwise chuse. Though it was not in thy power not to be born in original sin, yet who necessitated thee to com-

Rev. 13. 8.
John 3. 16.

*Id unum vos
accusat, respici-
cere non vultis.*

1 Presupposi-
tion not to be
mistaken.

*Licet aliquis
non possit grati-
am adipisci qui
reprobatur a
Deo; tamen
quid in hoc vel
illud peccatum
labatur, ex ejus
libero arbitrio
contingit: unde
et merito sibi*

*in culpam impu-
tatur.*

*Aq. par. 1. qu.
ad Atr. 3. resp.
23. Arg. terci-
um.*

2. Presup.

3. Presup.

mit such grosse actuall sins? In *Prov. 1. 29. they hated knowledge, they did not chuse the feare of the Lord. They did not use any liberty of will to chuse that which was good. What, was it because they could not? no, for albeit they could not, yet that was not the cause: No, They would none of my counsell, they despised all my reproofe, v. 30. Marke; The reason why they did not chuse, was not because they could not chuse, but because they would not.*

Its true, God doth not give them power to beleve, and to be renewed: but can they say, Though I would seriously, God would not? were they able to say thus? Though I desired it heartily, God would not give me grace; then they had some colour to cast it upon God: I would, but God would not: But they cannot cast it upon him. How often would I have gathered thee together even as the Hengathereth her chickens? but thou wouldst not. I would, said God; but you would not; nay, How often would I but you would not? *Mat. 23. 37. Though God be not so willing as to give them all power to beleve and be saved; yet he is aforehand with them.*

Its true, if the wicked should wil as far as they are able to will, yet their will were not able full out; but this doth not excuse them, because God alwaies resolved to be aforehand with them. Indeed, as in *Mat. 25. 29. God gives his servants this rule by which he ever goes towards them, Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; speaking of things in eodem genere. But to apply it to a man in the state of nature, is to say, Grace is given according to workes: which is the very dreggs of Pelagianisme. Yet however, all this is a most encouraging insimiation. Let any man use the power that God gives him, and he shall have more; as he that takes paines for Learning: As he that useth meanes to increase his estate, may find in ordinary providence, that the hand of the diligent makes rich. He that useth a penny well, makes it two pence; hee that useth two pennies very well, makes it a groat. So*

So that, though there be not such an *Infalibilis nex-
us*, that God hath bound himselfe in the use of our natu-
rall abilities to add supernaturall graces; yet undoubtedly
he will never be wanting to promote any good worke,
till men neglect or contemne. And this leaves men wholly
without excuse, and shews, it is not their cannot, but their
will not, which betrays them to their spirituall losses;
namely, their wilfull rejecting of Gods gracious offers.

Its true, God gives the wicked but one Talent, when
he giveth his children foure, two at the least; but they
cannot say, he is austere, reaping where he sowed not,
gathering where he strowed not. No, There's the same
proportion between one Talent, and gathering one more,
as there is between two, and the gathering of two others
&c. *new book*

4. Presup.

You know that they are ready to complain, as Christ
shews it in the Parable. Lord, I knew that thou wast an
hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gather-
ing where thou hast not strowed: But ye remember also
the Lords answer, Thou wicked and slothfull servant,
&c. *Mat. 25. 26* Marke, he casts the blame upon his
wilfulness, that he would not take pains for to trade.
So the wicked complain, Alas, God hath not sown any
power of conversion in my heart, and will he look for to
reap it? This is austere nesse and hardnesse of dealing. Oh
thou wicked and slothfull servant, &c. Why didst
thou not trade with the Talent that I gave thee? One
Talent should beget one, as well as two beget two, &c.
But I gave thee wit, and thou buriedst it in the earth,
and hast bin earthly with it. I gave thee knowledge,
and thou hast hid it in the earth, and not traded for refor-
mation according to it, &c. Alas, thou canst not plead a
cannot, but only a will not.

Its true, that if one wicked mans will be more willing
then another, it is not from himselfe, but from God. For
what hast thou that thou hast not received? 1 Cor. 4. 7. Its
God that maketh one wicked man to differ from another
in

5. Presup.
1 Cor. 5. 7.

Mat. 4. 41.

in goodnesse, and to be better then another. One wicked man is a drunkard, and another is better, &c. One wicked man is more wilfull, another is lesse. Its God that makes this difference; yet notwithstanding its his own fault, that he is not so good as his neighbour, especially when he sits under better helpes then his neighbour. The men of Niniveh shall rise up against this generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, a greater then Jonah is here. See, this generation was worse then Niniveh: Niniveh repented a great way, even in sackcloth and ashes; but this generation doth not. I grant, it was God that did make them do more then this generation doth do. For all would be alike wilfull, if it were not for him. But yet this generation cannot plead in judgment, Lord, thou wast not so gracious unto us, as to Niniveh; No, Jesus Christ expressly telleth them, Niniveh shall rise up in judgment against them, *g.d. Niniveh was not so wilfull as you; Niniveh would, but you would not.* Our Saviour Christ ascribes it to their wilfullnesse, that they were not so willing as Niniveh. *Niniveh would, but you would not.* Thus you see the suppositions, which I beseech you remember as we go, least perhaps you mistake us, *or*

DoH.

The reason why the wicked do not repent nor come out of their finnes, is not because they cannot (though they cannot) but because they will not. *both but*

A.G. 5. 3.

Peter saith to Ananias, *Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the holy Ghost, to keep back part of the price of the Land? Was it not once in thy power? Before thou didst promise, 'twas in thy power whether thou wouldst promise or no; did any force thee to promise? and when thou hadst promised, did any squeeze the lie out of thy tongue, that thou shouldest tell a lie to the Holy Ghost? did any drag thy fingers to the money, and force thee to handle it? no, thou wouldst lie, and thou wouldst finger it.*

Seven Demonstrations to prove this wicked heart L.O.

I. The

1. The wicked think they have power, and yet they will not doe according to their thoughts. What's the reason they presume to repent another time, but because they think they have power? what's the reason they hope to repent on their death beds, but because they think they have power; or at least, that they are able to beg power of *Christ Jesus*? Now by their own thoughts *God* will convince them, that they do not give over their sins, because they will not; like the sluggard, *Yet a little more sleep, yet a little more slumber, yet a little more folding of the hands to sleep*; the sluggard, he thinks he can rise time enough, and do all his businesse e're night, though he lie a little longer, and therefore does he presume to lie a while longer; So thou art loth to come out of thy sinnes yet, time enough yet, thinkest thou; thou hast secret thoughts thou art able to shift for Heaven afterwards; Tush, an unhappy youth may make a good *Ullman*, and a young Saint an old *Diuell*. Hence it is that the *whoremaster* can plead, Did not David commit adultery too? as though he could get up againe as well as he. The *drunkard*, Was not Noah drunk? as though he were able to repent as well as he. The *Theife on the Crosse*, Did not he repent at last gaspe? as though he could shift as well at last: so they think they can leave off their sins for a need; and therefore the reason why they do not, is only because they will not. He that thinks he hath a hundred pound of his own in his purse, and yet will not give a poor body a half penny: what's the reason he will not open his purse to give? because he cannot? No, he thinks he hath it, and can; but he will not; So the reason why thou art not reformed, is, thou wilt not.

2. Demonstration; because thou dost not so much as try whether thou canst or no: therefore thou dost not stick at a cannot, but a will not. When a Master bids his servant carry a sack of corne to the Mill, I cannot, sayes he; but cannot you try, sayes his Master? cannot you go

1 Demonst.

1. The wicked thinke they have power to repent.

Prov. 6. 10.

All the freewill mongers reason why they do not repent, is because they will not. Out of their own mouth will God condemn them.

Luk. 23. 40.

2 Demon.

2. They will not try.

Tensantes ad
Trojam perve-
nere Graci.
Theo.

go about it? no, he *will not try*; why then he is wilfull. If his master should see him sweating and striving to carry it, it were something; then he would say, he stuck at a *cannot*; but when he will not be at the pains to *try*, he sticks at a *will not*. So thou stickst at a *will not*, thou dost not every day in *arenam descendere*, sweat at good duties; thou dost not study and labour every day how to shun all temptations, and prevent all thy sinns; thou dost not goe about the cleansing of thy Family, the purging of thy House; thou wilt not go about it, and therefore the reason is, because thou *wilt not*. Nay, its all one whether thou hast power, yea or no. To what end should God give thee power? for thou *wilt not* use it. Nay, how dost thou *know*, but when thou goest about it, thou mayest meet with some power? but thou *wilt not try*. Cut down thy drunken signe, and *try*: never let drinking and swilling be in thy house, and *try*; set up constant holy conferences, and *try*; frequent prayer in thy Closet, and *try*, &c. But I have tryed againe and againe, and yet it will not do; every day *try* though: *Si crebro jacias, aleas aliud jeceris*; though thou hast thrown the Dye a hundred times, yet next time (may be) thou shalt throw a good cast; But thou wilt not *try*. I would have healed Babel, but she would not be healed. The field of the slothfull is all grown over with Thorns, and Nettles had covered all the face thereof; and the stone-wall thereof was broken down, Prov. 24. 31. What's the reason he hath not a good crop? because the ground would not beare it? no, how does he know? he will not *try*, he will not plow it, and harrow it, and weed it, and manure it, and sow it; he will not *try*: Therefore 'tis because he *will not*.

3 Demon.
They refuse
the help which
God offers.

3. Demonstration. God offers thee many good motions of power; I will help thee, and I will inable thee; and thou *wilt not* be helped. God casts in these good motions, and thou casts them out. Stand ye in the ways, and see, ask for the old paths, and walke therein, and ye shall finde rest

the grossest Self-murder.

rest to your souls; But they said, we will not walk therein. O, do but ask for the good way, and labour to walk in it, I'll help you and assist you; but we will not, say they. I set watch-men over you, saying, *Hearken to the sound of the Trumpet: But they said, We will not hearken.* verse. 17. This is plain English (as we say) you will not; ye have preaching every Sabbath day, and every week; but ye will not; God sends you good motions every day and houre, but ye will not; when a beggar will not be helpt, why does he starve? what, because he cannot chuse? no, he starves because he will starve. O, sayest thou, I do heare the word, and I cannot heare it better. I do pray daily, and I cannot pray better, &c. Thus thou retortest upon God as the unprofitable servant; Lo, there, thou hast that is thine; Lo, here's the best faith thy spirit helps me to, here's the best obedience that thy power inabled me to, &c. Lo, there thou hast that is thine, thou helpedst me with no more; I was not able to do better. *Quo ore potes hoc dicere*, sayes Gualter? with what face canst thou say thus? Is this all that God hath offered to inable thee? ah, thou wilfull creature! The Lord hath offered to help thee to a thousand times more, but thou wouldst not be helped.

4 Demonstration. God hath not only offered thee power to do more, and thou wilt not take it; but also given thee more power; and thou wilt not use it; and therefore the reason why thou dost not, is because thou wilt not: God hath given thee one talent of power at the least, why dost thou not put it out to the merchandizers and occupy with it! *ταλασσειν ινα αν δωματα*, sayes Chrys. The power that God hath vouchsafed thee is thy talent. Why didst thou not imploy it to the utmost? every Sermon gives thee new power, a new price: so every good counsell gives thee a new power; what art thou better? every blessing thou hast had, gives thee a new power, wherein art thou purer? does God give thee but eyes, thou hast more power to glorifie him, then he that hath

D

none,

Mat. 23. 16.

Mar. 23. 2.

4 Demon.

And will not use the power which he hath given.

Prov. 7. 16. 17.

Luke 16.2.

They grow worse by the means.

Bern.

Hol. 4.6.

none, &c. Every mercy helps thee with new power, but wherein dost thou use it? God hath given thee good memory, how hast thou stult it? Meanes and maintenance: how hast thou honoured God? why, &c. thine owne conscience accuseth thee, thou hast wasted his goods, wasted them upon belly and back, which have deuoured more thoughts then ever his worship could have; thou hast wasted them upon thy credit in the World, and thy pleasure, and thy lusts, and thy fleshy desires. How is it that I heare this of thee? Thou shalt heare one day of this dismall watch-word, Give account of thy stewardship, for thou mayst be no longer steward. What dost thou talking of thy want of power? I could not do this, and I could not do that; where are my goods that I lent thee? give account for thy Memory: Lord, I remember this and that Tale, this and that bawble; Thou evill and unprofitable servant thou, and why couldest thou not remember my Commandements as well? Give account for thy wit: Lord, I have contrived businesses, bargaines with in, I have jested, quipped, been merry with it; Thou evill and unprofitable servant thou, why wouldst thou not be witty for God, and for the good of thy soul? &c. God hath given a great deal of power more then ever thou bringest to act, and therefore thou art wastfull. The more power thou hast to do thy Demonstration; the more power thou hast to repent, the more thy will is against it. The more meanes that God doth vouchsafe, the more Preaching, the more knowledge, the more reprooves, the more enlightnings, the more power thou hast to repent, the more thy will is against it. Bernard sayes, such a one is a perverse man, that God is faine to say to, *Quid faciam tibi?* What shall I doe unto thee? O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? for thy righteousness goes away like the dew, Hos. 6.4. The more meanes thou enjoyest, the more thy righteousness goes away. One would think, the more the Sunshyne of the Gospel ariseth, the more your righteousness

teousnesse should increase; It goes the more away: like the dew, the more the Sun riseth, the more it vaniseth away; like many of you, the more preaching you have, the further ye are off; a man might be acquainted with you heretofore, but now that you have been soundly rebuked for your sins, the further you flie off; nay, some of you that were somewhat forward heretofore, are mockers now; some of you that were somewhat forwardly heretofore, are more covetous and wastish; and passionate; and worldly like the weeds, the more they are pluck'd up, the more they do grow, or like the Earth, the more it is washed, the dirtier it proves; so the more means ye have to be enabled to good, the willfuller ye are.

6. Demonstration; because thy cannot is a voluntary cannot; thou hast wilfully brought the most part of thy cannot upon thee. I cannot give to the poor, sayst thou; yea, but thou hadst it once, and thou hast wilfully spent it; thou hadst Lands, and Meanes, and commings in, but thou hast spent it at the Ale-house; thou hast consumed it on the game-house: Thus thy cannot is a voluntary cannot; *causa causa est causa causati*; thy will was the cause of thy cannot; and therefore thy will is the cause of thy not giving to the poore. I cannot read, sayes one, and no marvell if I be ignorant; but thy Parents would have set thee to Schoole, and thou wouldst be a trowant, therefore thou art willingly ignorant. I cannot remember a Sermon, sayes another, no wonder though I repeat it not in my Family, but forget it, as I do; but thou hast willingly ram'd it with matters of the World, or hast weakened it with drinking, and therefore thou art wilfully forgetfull; &c. The unprofitable servant was curst that had layd up his pound safe in a Napkin; he did not lessen it, nor imbezel it, but only layd it up, and yet he was curst because he did not διπλαῦν προσεννοῦν, sayes Chrys. hee was curst because he did not double his pound; ah, the wofull estate that thou art in! If he were accursed that he did lay up his pound, what shall become of thee

6. Demon.
Thou cannot is
voluntary.
A Moral impo-
tency.

Luk. 19. 20
Chrysost.

that dost lessen it? he did not double his abilities, and therefore he was cursed; thou dost not only *not double* thy abilities, but thou dost *lessen* them. God hath enabled thee to do many a thing, and now thou art not able; thou hast *willingly* lessened thine *ability*: now then thou canst not excuse thy selfe that thou *canst not*, because thou hast brought this *cannot on thy selfe*; Thou *canst not* weep at a Sermon; but thou *couldst* once; thou *canst not* resist such a lust, but thou *couldst* once; and thou hast *willingly brought this cannot on thy soul*; and therefore this is all the cause, because *that thou wilt not*.

7 *Demon.*

They are contented with their cannot.

Jer. 5. 31.

7. Demonstration. May be thou *canst not*; yea, but thou art *contented with thy cannot*; thou *canst not* be holy, and thou art *contented not to be*; thou canst not crucifie thy lust, and thou art *contented with this cannot*; nay, thou *wouldst not be able*. Sir, I tell you how you may put up this injury if you will. But Sir, you shall not make me put it up, *I will not be directed by you*; as it was with desperate *Judab*, *My people love to have it so*. Thou art carnall, and thou lovest to be so. Were a man in the stocks, and not able to get out, yet if he be contented to be there, though he cannot get out, that is not the reason of his staying, but *he will not*; thou canst not walk humbly and holily, and thou lovest to have it so; what would you have me so pure, forsooth? So then, the reason is, because that thou *wilt not*; if thy will were not it, thou wouldst never be content with thy *cannot*; the Congregation is bad, and thou lovest to have it so; the more custome thou shalt have for thy Ale-house, like a bad *Clerk of the Assises*: I heard one speak it my selfe, He was glad there were so many *Rogues*, he had the more money; so some of you are glad there be so many frequenters of the *Ale-bench*, yee have the more custome, yee love to have it so; ye cannot reforme the sins of one another, and ye love to have it so.

The *Presuppositions* premised, and the *Demonstrations*

pre-

prefixed, it followes now, that I lay down the Grounds of this necessary truth. (*Scil.*)

The reason why a wicked man doth not turne unto God, is not because he cannot (though he cannot) but because he will not.

He cannot say this at the day of judgement, Lord, thou knowest, I left every sin that I could, and I took all the best courses that I could to become a new creature, but I could not. A wicked man shall not be able to say thus without lying. The man in the Gospel that had not on the Wedding-Garment, could hee say, Lord, I was not able to go to the shop of the Gospel to seek one? No, He was speechlesse, Mat. 22. 12. God finds out the hypocrite, though but one, and when once discovered, he is confounded and silenced with the guilt of his own wilfulnesse.

The first Ground.

THe first Ground is this which is observed by our learned Divines at the Synod of Dort, namely,

Every man can do more good then he doth, and shun more evil then he does: though I confesse, not in a gracious manner. If I can prove this to be true, it will necessarily follow, that the reason why a wicked man doth not return, is not because he cannot, but only because he will not.

Arguments to prove it.

1. Consider, If a man can do more then he doth, nothing can hinder him from doing more then he does, but his will: when the fire can burn more, it doth burn more; because it hath no will to come between the power of burning, and the act of burning, to suspend it. The fire is a natural agent, and therefore burns as much as it can: but a man is a voluntary agent, and therefore when he can do a thing, and does not, 'tis because his will comes between

*Art. 3. & 4. in
refus. 3. 4. error.
possit.*

*I Consid.
Every man
can do more
good then he
doth.*

between to suspend it: so that the reason is, *He will not*. Pilate had power to crucifie Christ, and power not to do it; *John 19. 10.* He had power not to do it; why then does he crucifie him? Not because he had no power to doe otherwise, hee confesses himselfe he had power to do otherwise; but he crucified Christ, because he would do so. When a man hath power to do a thing or not to do a thing; *its the will that either suspends or determines*.

Consid. 2.

Consideration, that if a man can do more then he does, and yet will not, he must needs voluntarily hinder himselfe from doing that which he cannot; the reason is, because a man must first do that which he can, before he can come to that part which he cannot. Suppose a lame man were to go to London from hence, and not able to go one mile of the journey, but there stands one at the Church-stile that offers, if he will but crawl thither, to carry him; he is able to crawl so far as the Church-stile, but he will not; does not he voluntarily hinder himselfe from going to London? That which he can do, must be done first, before that which he cannot. So ye that live in your sins, you must first do that which you can, before you can looke that God should help you to doe that which you cannot; If thou dost all that thou canst, for ought that thou knowest, Christ (though he hath not absolutely engaged himselfe) stands at the Church-stile, there ready to helpe thee. There be men in the World whom he is resolved to helpe; thou dost not know but thou art the man; Christ hath not told thee any thing to the contrary, but only he bids thee do what thou canst. Canst thou not cut off thy long haire? are thou siffer able to cut it? have not you a Tongue in your heads, yee that keep disorders in your Ale-houses? can not you say, Get you hence, ye drunken companions, here's no entertainment for you; you must do that which you can, before you can expect Christs help to do that which you cannot; and if you will not do that which

you

you can, you do voluntarily hinder your own selves from doing that which you cannes; Joshua could not stand before Ai, nor hinder a close Achan from taking the golden wedge; but when it was taken and known, he was able to make him an example. Joshua fasted and cryed unto God all day until night, that the Lord would mercifully save him and all Israel; Now hear what answer the Lord gives him. Get thee up saith he, why ye stand here? Jos. 7. 10. Israel hath sinned, go and execute justice, go and do that first, and then I will answer thee about Ai; for if Joshua would not have done what he could, the Lord would never have help'd him to do that which he could not. So thou prayst for mercy and grace, oh that God would condescend thee and pardon thee! Get thee up, says God, dost thou stand praying for mercy as long as such things, and such things are not reformed? thou hast drunkenness in thy house, go and reform that; thou art in league with a sort of base lusts, go and reform them; if thou wilt not do that which thou canst, how canst thou be sure God will helpe thee to do that which thou canst not? no; thou stickst at a will not, as long as thou refusest to do that.

Consider, If a man will not do that which he can, neither will he do that which he cannot, if he could; the servant that will not go five or six miles in a day which he can, for his Master, neither would he go a hundred miles for his Master, if he could; you that can reforme outwardly, at least if you would, and yet will not, neither would you reforme more if you could; Ye have money in your purses, cannot you spend it better then upon swilling, and drinking, and gaming? ye can well enough, but ye will not. So ye would do, had you that true riches, Luke 16. 11. Ye have naturall abilities; if ye will not be faithfull in them, so it would be, if so be you had better; ye that have morall and civill endowments, if ye will not be faithfull in them, neither would you, if God should lend you more, and ye are able

3 Consid.

Confid. 4.

Prov. 22. 13.

able to avoid swearing and lying, but ye will not; neither would ye avoide all other sins if yee could; if a man will not do that which he can; neither will he do that which he cannot, if he could.

4. Consider, If a man will not do that which he can, can or cannot, all's one to him, all sticks at his will. I cannot repent, and I cannot give over my sins, sayest thou: and I pray thee, who told thee that thou canst not? I am naked, sayes Adam, and who told thee that thou wert naked, sayes God; Gen. 3. 11. So may I say, who told thee thou canst not? does not thy own conscience tell thee, 'tis because thou wilt not? I cannot digge, sayes the lazy Steward, and to begge I am ashamed, Luke 16. 3. I cannot digge; if he had a cudgell about his back, it would make him digge; to beg I am ashamed, sayes he; he was not ashamed to cozen his Master of his goods, but he was ashamed to begge. I have married a wife, and I cannot come, Luke 14. 20. No? what, did his wife tie his legges? There is a Lyon in the way, I cannot go out, sayes the sluggard; alas, thy own sluggish wilfull wils are this cannot. Can or cannot, all's one to them; they never come to trie whether they can, yea or no; the sluggard never look'd out to see the Lyon in the way, but he dream'd there was one there, and he was willing to beleieve it, he would not go out to see; the idle steward did not try whether he could digge, yea or no; if he had taken the Spade in his hand and gone about the worke, 'twere another matter; but I cannot digge, sayes he; he never would put it to tryall, but takes another course without trying of that; so that all's one, can or cannot, if a man will not do that which he can; can or cannot, all's one to him.

5. Consider. If a man will not do that which he can, this will make a mans conscience, when he comes to speake in sober sadnesse, thank himself for his perishing. Men do sometimes do but jest with them now, while they can say, Tush, 'tis because I cannot beleieve; and because I cannot repent

side

but

but at the houre of conviction or the day of judgement at farthest, then conscience will speake in sober sadnesse ; *When I was a hungry, ye gave me no meat, sayes Christ; when I was athirst, ye gave me no drinke; I was a stranger, and ye tooke me not in; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not, Mat. 25. 43.* Marke, Christ puts no *cannots* on their conscience at the day of judgement ; Could they say, Alas, we had never a bit of bread for to do it, never a drop of drinke for to do it ? No ; you shall see how their consciences were *mute* ; they could not say that they *could not* ; could not ye comfort Christs dear members as well as *mock them* ? couldst thou not take them into thy house, as well as *carnall acquaintance* ? its worthy observation to consider, that generally Gods *threatnings* do not turne against *Cannots*, nor his judgements against *Cannots*, but against new particular sins, that they might have *avoyded* ; for though mens sinfull consciences doe necessarily incline men to sinne, yet not unto this sinne, nor that sin ; Non determinat necessariò ad hoc vel illud malum, hic & nunc, say our Brittain Divines at the Synod. Sinfull concupiscence does not necessarily determine men upon these and these sins, with the particular circumstances which they live in, as this rapine, this lie, &c. thus ye see this will make a sure Ground of our Doctrine, if so be we can prove it.

Every man can doe more good then he does, and avoid more evil then he does.

This is a most certaine and infallible Truth, and needs no confirmation ; but I will prove it notwithstanding.

First, because God doth complaine against the wicked, for their voluntary doing no more good then they doe ; what, so much preaching, and no more good ? so many means, and no more fruit ? &c. so God complaines against Israel, Nevertheless, they departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, &c. and, there remained the groves also ; in Samaria, 2 Kings 13. 6. the grove also ; what, not so much, as the grove cut downe ? And, ye will not leave the

I. Argu.

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sins

sins of *Ieroboam*; that were enough stubbornesse, one would thinke; but ye must suffer the *grove also*? Reforme nothing? no, not the *grove* under your face? See how *God* girdeth their *willfull security*, that they would do no more good then they did; not so much as cut downe that *grove*? so many warnings, and threatnings, &c. and yet the *grove also*? yet thy *filthy Tongue*, thy *covetousnesse also*, &c. not only keep thy other lusts, but thy profanesse also?

Secondly, because otherwise there were no roome for praise nor dispraise. If a man could do no more good then he does, nor shun no more evill then he does, then no man could be praised nor dispraised; you know that wicked men and women may do many commendable things, at least more commendable ones then others: Does not our Saviour discommend *Bethsaida* and *Corazin* in comparison of *Tyre* and *Sidon*? Woe unto thee *Corazin*, woe unto thee *Bethsaida*; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in *Tyre* and *Sidon*, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes, *Math. 11. 21*. Might not they have shewed so much repentance at the least? could not they have put on sackcloth on their loyns, and powred ashes on their heads, if they would? they might have done so much at the least; and honoured the workes and preaching of our Saviour with an outward honour at the least. You that have such abundant teaching as ye have, ye might honour the Gospel with some outward honour at the least; that would be somewhat commendable; which most of you will not.

Thirdly, because otherwise, there would be no roome for the sword of the Magistrate; if a man could omit no more sin then he does, then what meanes our Pillories and Gallowes, &c. and other punishments upon Malefactors? will any man be so vain as to say, *Achan could not chuse but take the Babylonish Garment*? certainly, he might have let it alone, if he would; why hast thou troubled us? sayes *Iosuah*, *Ios. 7. 25*. Alas, he was not able

2. *Argu.*
Tameis impossibile erat Judais converti per externam predicationem Evangelii, absque prae determinatione gratiae: quia tamen obduratiores erant Judaei propria malitia quam Tyrii & Sidonii, idcirco à scrutatore cordium corripuntur.
Doct. Prid. lect. de med. scient. p. 65.

3. *Argu.*

to answer, oh Sir, *I could not do otherwise.* No, no; he might have omitted it: And therefore the Law of man is favourable to such as offend against their wils; it does not hang such as kill against their wils.

Fourthly, because though a carnall man cannot put off the old man, nor shake off the dominion of sin in generall, nor deny himselfe, but his very nature is sinfull and fleshly, he does naturally sin; yet it is not his nature to commit this sin at this time, and in this manner; The wickedest man under Heaven goes about his sin with pre-*viall deliberation*, and a most free disposition of the means; the drunkard goes freely into the Ale-house, and call's freely for a juggle, or two, or three, as his lust is; his Host, he freely suffers these disorders in his house, and freely goes to the Tap and does draw it, &c. Ephraim did willingly walke after the Commandement, Hos. 5. 11. The wicked King of Israel commanded them that will to worship at Bethell, and they did freely and willingly obey it. Pilate willingly contented the people, and therefore he scourged our Saviour, Marke 15. 15. for though all this was done by the determinate counsell of God; yet Gods counsell put no sinfull necessity upon his will, he did freely and willingly do it; the wicked turne the Grace of God into wantonnesse, Jude 4. Marke, the Grace of God; Grace, whereby they might do more good then they do, and avoid more evil then they doe. It's true; a wicked man is the servant of sin, and cannot but sin; he is naturally a servant of sin; of sin, I say; but he is voluntarily and freely a servant of this sin; for the Lord gives him reason, and counsell, and good motions, and many common graces, whereby he may be freed from this or that act, but he will not; he will breake out into these and these passionate words, now and then; say reason what it will, and common grace what it will; he will do it, he will do this, and he will do that. I confesse, that when a wicked man is desperate, and given up of God, then it is otherwise; then his will is so greedy, that he cannot

4. Argu.

DING

E 2

take

5. Argu.

*Insuperabiliter
mouet, quamvis
sit aliqua resi-
stentia.*

take it off; but he is the more inexcusable, because his will is then double.

Fifthly, *A wicked man can do more good, &c. for a godly regenerate soul may avoid more sin then he does.* Though God have freed him from the slavery of sin, and he is become the servant of righteousness, Rom. 6. 18. nevertheless, they may do more good then they do, and avoid sin a great deale more then they do; What man will say, that *David* could not otherwise chuse but commit that *adultery* which he did, and that *murder* which he did? I appeale to your consciences, ye souls that are godly! When ye pray, *Forgive us our Trespases*, do not ye acknowledge withall, that ye have been wanting to the grace of God? Do not ye confesse it with shame, that you have given way to sundry temptations that by the grace of God ye might have overcome? And that ye have omitted many a good opportunity, that by the grace of God ye might have made use of? I deny not, but God does irresistibly convert his Elect at the first, and infallibly carry them on to the end, for the maine; but in particular actions he does not so; but though their wills be now free by grace, yet they may freely sin, even then when they obey; and freely obey, even then when they transgresse; and so they are forced to confesse they might avoid more evill then they do, and do more good then they do.

Againe, *A wicked man may do more good then he does, and avoid more evill then he does; I prove it by induction upon his conscience.* By these Particulars.

First, for the outward acts of sin in the members; thus all profane persons, drunkards, &c. yee are all convinced undeniably in your consciences, these are sins in the very outward members; *voluntas est domina membrorum.* Can yee say, yee cannot passe by an Ale-house when yee turn in? ye cannot come unto Sermons? your owne Legs they shall judge you. Can you say, you cannot give over your oathing and lying? &c. your owne

owne *Teeth* and *Lips* shall judge you, &c. If you do not root out these sins, its without doubt because ye *will not*. The Lord hath made all the outward man at the command of the *will*, and therefore if the outward man be out of order, 'tis because ye *will*; *μήδεις ἐν ἀσχηταῖς ὅτι ἐν τάλας τοῖς ἔργοις ὁδὴν ἀνάστα τοῖς σαρκεῖς*, sayes Chrysost. Let no man say, I have but one Talent, and I have no power to be good; a *Talent* hath power to go for a *Talent*, and 12^d. for a shilling; and if it do not, 'tis because ye *will not*. Hast thou not power over thine owne outward members vouchsaf'd thee of God? the Lord in mercy lets thy will have a *disposicall* power over thy members, as the Moralists call it; and why canst thou not bridle them; as *Christ* said to the Officer that smote him, *If I have spoken well, why smitest thou me?* Joh. 18. 23. couldst thou not have held in thy fingers? Thou art inexcusable then for all thy profane sins.

Secondly, *Thou hast naturall affections in thee*, and by them thou mayest do more good then thou dost, and *beun more evill then thou dost*. Thus all civill Professors are left inexcusable. Canst thou not get more strictnesse of *walking*, though not for love unto God, yet for love unto thy selfe? be more frequent in good duties for hope of Heaven, and for fear of Hell? that's better then nothing; better do them so, then not at all. What cannot a man do for *selfe-love* and for *fear*? there is never a duty of Religion, but a man may every day do for love unto himselfe, and for fear. God hath left these *affections* in thy soule on purpose. I know this is not enough; but what of that? Why dost thou not go so far as thou mayest? what aileth thee that thou canst not tame downe thy pride for *fear* of Gods *judgements*? and bridle thy base passions for *fear* of Hell? It is not unknown, that God hath vowed to destroy all the workers of iniquity. 'Tis not unknown, that he hath prepared Hell for such as thou art, as long as thou livest as thou dost; Thou knowest this is true, and thou knowest *God wil be as good as his*

Word;

Amor sui ipsius est obiectum motivum; at Amor Dei ipsius est tantum obiectum terminativum. Amel. Caf. Conf. de Char. erga Deum.

Quis poterit ?
as Monsanus
hath it.

Word; and thou art not able to abide it. Why dost thou not curbe thy proud stubborne lusts for feare of this Hell? That's better then nothing; if thou canst not do it for love, yet why canst thou not do it for feare? hast thou not as much reason as a brute creature? that is greedy of meate, yet a whip-stick is able to scare him from it; an horse is desirous to stand still, yet a spur and a rod is able to make it go faster; and is not Hell more fearefull then all rods? Why dost thou not take heed for feare, lest God should send thee to Hell? a sinner and a hypocrite are inexcusable herein, for Hell may feare them; The sinners in Sion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites; who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? Esay 33. 14. who of us is able to dwell with everlasting flames? and hypocrites may go so far; feare Hell, and abstaine from a million of sins; for feare of these everlasting burnings. Canst thou say thou canst not resist sin for feare of Gods judgements? No; thou canst resist sin for feare of lesse evils then so; the fear of mens seeing thee can keep thee from committing adultery in the Market place, and cannot the feare of God restraine thee from incontinencie? thou darest not transgresse the Kings Law for feare of the Gallows, and cannot the feare of Hell restraine thee from transgressing of Gods? Gods displeasure is greater then the Kings, and thou knowest it; God is truer in his Law then any mortall man, and thou knowest it: and fearest thou not me? feare is not me, saith the Lord? will ye not tremble at my presence? Jer. 5. 22. Canst thou say, thou art not able to feare him so much as servilely? that is not so; for when thou art sick and ready to dye, then thou wilt feare him; then, oh thou wouldst faine become a new creature, and all out of feare of the great God; and canst thou not now? No, no; now here be pleasures to be had, and thou wilt have them; here is the World, and thou wilt carke; here is businesse, and thou wilt be doing, and thou wilt not find leisure for God; no; thou wilt not.

Canst

Canst thou not do this that *God bids thee*, at least out of feare? this is nothing but a *lie of Satan*; thou wouldst do them all for feare of a man. Suppose there were Lawes made that every man who does not pray in his family Morning and Evening, should assuredly be hanged; whosoever swears an Oath, should be hang'd as soon as he had sworn it; Whosoever breaks out into any bitter railing speech should suffer death. Suppose, I say, to all duties of Religion it were death to omit them, and the King had made such a certain sure Law; I dare say, there would be many millions of Professors more in *England* then there are; rather then ye would be gibbeted, many swearers would never swear more; many liers never lie more; many profane householders never omit Prayers in their Families more; and couldst thou do this for feare of a man? why canst thou not do it for feare of the great God?

Thirdly, *The Lord hath given thee naturall counsell, and naturall reason, and prudence.* Oh, sayst thou, I am tempted before I am aware, and the passion is up before I am aware; I cannot help it for my life. No, I beleve thee when the Divell is once up, there is no allaying that foule Fiend for the present; thou canst not immediately allay it. But why canst thou not prevent it, with counsell and deliberation? the very Heathens have done this, and thou hast advantage of all Heathens: God hath given thee not only reason in thy head, and a naturall conscience in thy brest, but also direction in his word to prevent it? and if thou dost not, thou wilt not. Are the lusts of thine appetite violent? why then dost thou not fore-cast for to rein them? Why dost thou not abstaine from going to Feasts a while? Why dost thou not stint thy Trencher with so much? If thy lusts be on fire, why dost thou feed them with fuell? Are the lusts of anger and wrath predominant in thee? thou rapst out an Oath before thou art aware; why then dost thou not, as *Chrysostome* would have thee, *Set forfeitures for every Oath*? Why dost thou not intreat Gods people se-

severely to reprove thee, and exact a fine of thee for every *misgoverning word*? Why dost thou not bawke such acquaintance as may occasion thy tongue to cast out Oathes? Why dost thou not club down thy lusts with argument upon argument? Shall I be touchie to be damned, and proud to be damned? &c. Even arguments of *self-love* are able to knock them down. I do not know how: No? that's because thou wilt not know: *They know not, neither will they understand*, Psal. 82. 5. So, thou knowest not, neither wilt thou understand: that's the reason thou still walkest in darknesse. Why dost not thou oppose thy lusts at first rising? *Non obtinebis ut desinat, si incipere permiseris*, sayes Seneca: Thou canst never get victory, except thou be here first in the field: The Lord hath given thee counsels on this fashion, why dost thou not use them? onely because thou wilt not. Hast thou impediments? *Clarancus* had them too, but he overcame them, sayes Seneca: why dost not thou? If thou wilt not, thou dost willingly perish: thou mightst do more then thou dost, but thou wilt not: and thou mightst shun more then thou dost, but thou wilt not.

Fourthly, because thou wilt say, All these things are but naturall, and morall, and civil, I may perish for all these; but alas, I am not able to do any thing spiritually; I cannot beleeve, I cannot repent. Though this be very true, yet thy Plea is no excuse: for though they be naturall, yet they are first. First that's in order which is naturall, and after that which is spiritual: and if thou stickest there, thou stickest at a will not. The Lord hath taken a sufficient course to humble thee, and thou wilt not be humbled. Thou saist, Thou canst not obey spiritually: I grant it, it's true; nor repent spiritually: why then, Wilt thou not be humbled that thou canst not? As God said to Pharaoh, *How long wilt thou refuse to humble thy self before me?* Exod. 10. 3. There is externall humiliation, as *Ahabs* humiliation; thou maist come

come to that, before that humiliatiō thou canst not expresse. Why artthou not humbled with that which thou may'st?

First then, Why dost thou not see thy case to be damnable? Dost thou not know that judgement is past upon all to damnation? Rom. 5.18. *All men are damned out of Christ.* Whosoever is not a *new creature* is not in *Christ*; but is a damn'd man to this day; thou knowest the Lord himselfe doth say thus; What hinders thee now from deducting a particular there-from? If upon all men, then upon me; if all be damned to this day that are not *new creatures in Christ*, then I am a damned man to this hour; *this logick* God doth vouchsafe thee; why dost thou not reason on this fashion? I am a damned man, and a damned woman to this day. If thou would'st be brought to this passe, there might be some hope of thee; *but thou wilt not*, thou wilt scrape up some hopes or other, thou wilt not believe this. *Believe thus*, sayes God; *but I will not*, sai'st thou: no; thou wilt have thy lust still, and thou wilt not believe this. If thou would'st believe verily thou art a *damned man*, because thou art not a *new creature in Christ*; may be, thou would'st never have done till thou art one, thou would'st forsake all, and follow *Christ in all things*; But thou wilt not.

Secondly, *I cannot*, sai'st thou: Why then wilt thou not *despaire in thy selfe*? a man must despaire as he is, otherwise he can never *get into Christ*; as long as a man lives, and does after the flesh, he can have no true hope of mercy or pardon, or any thing; no, he is a *dead man*; all the *Angels of Heaven* cannot help him; if there were a thousand *Christs*, he should perish without them; and why wilt thou not despair in thy selfe? Despaire? God forbid. I'll never despair while I live, God is more mercifull then so, and I hope I need not despair. *Christ dyed for sinners*, and I were a fool if I should despair. Thus thou pleadest with God for thy vain hopes; But why wilt

thou, saies God; why wilt thou plead with me? thou hast transgressed against me, *Jer. 2. 29.* Thou pleadest for hopes, and liest in thy sinnes; why wilt thou? Mark, the *Will* is set on it; and thou *wilt* plead; Thou mightest despair of thy selfe, but thou *wilt not*, and therefore thou wilt wilfully perish.

Thirdly, but I cannot pull down mine own heart, nor master mine own will, saist thou: No? Why then canst thou not go and *resigne it to God*? Lord, here is a proud heart, I cannot humble it; Oh, here is a stony heart, I cannot break it; Lord, do thou: here is a rebellious heart, *I cannot subdue it*; Lord, do thou. But thou wilt not *resigne up this heart*, thou wilt not set about it as well as thou canst; they will not *frame their doings to turn unto God*, *Hef. 5. 4.* they will not: so, thou wilt not frame thy selfe to do it as well as thou canst; and therefore thou dost *willingly go on*, and thou art wholly *inexcusable before God*; and when he sends thee to *Hell*, thou shalt know *thine own will* brought thee thither. Thou *might'st reform thine outward man*, but thou *wilt not*; thou might'st bridle thy lusts, and thy passions, but thou *wilt not*; thou *might'st* take a thousand good opportunities, but thou *wilt not*. And therefore thou hast no excuse before God; thou dost willingly perish. It's true, *thou canst not*, may be; but necessity is not it, but thou *wilt not*. Indeed, if thou didst every day labour to fight against thy lusts, and resist to the utmost, and *could'st not*, then it were necessity; but thou *do'st not*: nay, *thou wilt not*. He that resisteth, and then cannot, he may plead, Lord, what a wofull necessity of sinning am I in; but thou *givest way to thy lusts*, and therefore thou art *inexcusable*, and thou dost *willingly perish*.

*Repugnanti,
non volenti ne-
cessitas est.
Sen.*

The second Ground.

The second now follows. Every wicked man is slothfull and negligent. Thou evill and slothfull servant, sayes Christ, *Mat. 25. 26.* Thou hast been lazy with the *Talent*. I gave thee. I gave thee preaching and teaching, and thou hast been lazy to heare it. I have given thee knowledge, of that which is good, and thou hast been lazy to improve it. I have pulled thee to Prayer by the motion of my Spirit, and thou hast been lazy at the duty. Thou evill and slothfull servant, I have given thee many a sweet opportunity to be ridd of that base lust that thou art most addicted unto, and thou hast been lazy to take it. This is another ground of this doctrine. Now if this be so, thou must lay the blame on thy owne will, and not on Gods denying thee power; Because sloth is a fault of the will. I cannot call him a sluggard that sticks at a *cannot*, but only him that sticks at a *will not*. He that labours and strives as much as he can, none will call him a sluggard; but him that can labour more, and will not. Sloth is a voluntary fault of the will; How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? *Prov. 6. 9.* How long wilt thou? its not a fault of *impotency*, but of *will*.

Five Demonstrations to prove this.

First, if thou be slothfull to good duties, then thou dost only imagine a company of *cannots*. I cannot do as I would, sayest thou. No, why then art thou slothfull, to make more imaginary *cannots*? A slothfull man imagines more *cannots* then there be. I cannot go this journey, sayes he, I shall be weary, I shall be rob'd, I shall fall off my horse; I cannot travell it; the way of a slothfull man is a hedge of Thornes; But the way of the righteous is made plaine, sayes Solomon: The slothfull man

1 Demon.

he imagines ther's a Thorne hedge in his way, I shall be prick'd, I cannot get over it. What? is there a Thorne hedge in the way? No; for the righteous that goes it, hee finds it plaine, he sees none. No, there is no such Thorne hedg in the way, but he does imagine one; and therefore his *will not* is his *let*, not his *cannot*; for he does but imagine a *cannot*. So dost thou say, I cannot do thus and thus. Why then art thou slothfull to imagine *more cannots* and Thorne-hedges then there are? I cannot live then; Oh, I cannot go so often to Prayer; and if I should do as you say, I should be houted at up and downe: you tell me I am a Hell-hound for my pride and my passions; Oh, if I should beleeeve this, I should never have merry day more. Alas, all these are but *imaginary cannots*; *imaginary Thorne hedges*. I cannot be so strict, neither can I put it up. I say, thou dost but imagine a company of *cannots*, and therefore thou *wilt not*.

2 Demon.

2. Demonstration, If thou be slothfull to good duties, then thou makest *every little difficulty a cannot*; nothing but an *impossibility* is a *cannot*. But if thou beest slothfull, thou makest *every little difficulty a cannot*. I cannot turne mine own heart, nor break mine own heart. But why then art thou slothfull to make every little difficulty a *cannot*? a slothfull man makes every little difficulty a *cannot*. *The slothfull man will not plow by reason of cold; and therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.* Hee will not plow by reason of cold, hee sticks at a very little difficulty: his fingers are so tender, forsooth, they must not ake; his Toes are so Lady-like, they must not smart; because its a little difficult, therefore he will not do it; *He will not plow by reason of cold.* Well, beg then, and yee will. Cannot you endure a little cold? yea, he could endure it, but it would be difficult. And therefore sayes the Text, *he will not plow by reason of cold.* He does not stick at an *impossibility*, for then indeed he *could not*. But the slothfull man will not plow by reason of cold; he sticks onely at a difficulty, and therefore he

will

Prov. 20. 4.

will not. Nay, if he should labour soundly indeed, his very labour would keep him from being a cold. The truth is, its the labour of plowing that he is against, and therefore every little cold shall serve for an excuse. So, why art thou slothful to count every petty difficultie a cannot? Its an uncomfortable thing to be alwaies poring on my sins; I cannot abide it: troublesom to be tonguetied: what, not speak a word but onely with warrant from Scripture? I cannot abide it. What, never help my self at a dead lift by telling a lie? never right my self by a little revenge? never complie nor sort with such and such old acquaintance, because they drop out an Oath now and then before they are aware? O, I cannot abide it. What, thus precise? I am not able to abide it. No? cannot, cannot thy stubborn will stoop to a little difficultie? Get thee to Hell, and see if thou canst abide that; and there thank thine own will for thy perishing.

3. Demonstration. If thou beest slothful, then thou turnest thy very abilities into cannots; not onely all difficulties, but also thine abilities into cannots: Like a Drone that is lazie, he loses his Abilities that he hath. By much slothfulness the building decayeth. Alas, I am very dead-hearted, saist thou. Nay, but O man, the time was when God quickned thee at a Sermon; why didst thou let it decay? the time was, when thou wert a little well-affected; why didst thou let it decay? time was when thou wert soberer, and less given to wrath and passions; and why didst thou let these good conditions decay? The Lord gave the them heretofore, and thou hast plaid the sluggard with them; and therefore now they are decayd. Thy quickning is decayd, thy sorrow for sin is decayd, thy meltings decayd; Through much slothfulness the building does decay. He that is slothful in his work, is brother to a great waster. So thou art a brother to a great waster, because thou art slothful.

4. Demonstration. If thou beest slothful, then thou dost

3 Demon.

Eccles. 10. 18.

Prov. 1. 16.

4 Demon.

Prov. 26. 14.

doft Voluntarily nail thy self unto cannots. There is many a sin that now thou art a slave to, that thou mightest have trodden under thy foot; but now thou canst not: thou mightest have gone further and further on in reformation, if thou hadst held on when thou wast going; like a Coach, it's easier to make it run on when once it's going, then stirre it when once it stands still; and now thou canst not, now thou art nailed to it, *like the door to his hinges.* Now thou canst pray, and pray, and grow ne'r the the better, hear and read, and ne'r the holier: *As the door turneth upon its hinges, so doth the slothful man on his bed.* The door goes to and fro; to it goes, and fro it goes, it goes (may be) all the year long; and still it hangs just upon the same hinges, and after seven years travel, it hangs there where it did; it's nailed to its hinges. So 'tis with a sluggish heart, he goes to a Prayer, and from a Prayer; to a Sermon, and from a Sermon; to a good Dury, and from a good Dury; and still he hangs just on the same hinges. He hath gotten no ground, is just where he was; so thou art just at the same pass, after a thousand prayers, and a thousand Sermons, and millions of good duties, still thou hangest on thy old duties, ne'r the more pure to this hour.

5 Demon.

Prov. 19. 24

5. Demonstration. Sloth is a lazie putting forth by halves of that power one hath. This also is the very Nature of sloth; when a man hath more power then he shews, but he is lazie to put it all forth. The Scripture uses a Comparison of a man that *hides his hand in his bosome*, and though he have meat standing before him, yet he will not so much as bring it to his mouth. *A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosome, and will not bring it to his mouth.* What? why does he starve? because he hath not any meat? No; the meat standeth before him. Because he hath not any hands? No; he hath a hand in his Bosome. Because his hand hath the dead Palsie, and he not able to stirre it? No; he will

will not put in forth: *He will not bring it to his mouth,* sayes the Text. So when thou art *Praying*, thou wilt not put thy selfe forth; when thou art *reforming*, thou dost not put thy selfe forth; when thou art about any good service, thou dost not put thy selfe forth; here is a *Sabbath before thee*, and a *Sacrament before thee*, but thou wilt not reach it to thy mouth, thou wilt not put thy selfe forth. The Lord tels thee, *that this sin will break thy neck*, & thou wilt not so much as reach it to thy mouth, nor apply it to thy heart; may be, it would humble thee, and feed thee; but thou wilt not reach it to thy mouth. What a deale of power hast thou? but thou put'st it forth by the halves; when thou art examining thy Conscience, thou put'st thy selfe forth by the halves; thou might'st put thy selfe forth many degrees more, but thou wilt not.

Oh beloved; this same point will strike the World dumb before God, even this, *Why did ye not put your selves forth to the utmost?* Thou hast somewhat more in thee then by reason of thy lazinesse thou do'st put forth.

There is more then by reason of sluggishnesse thou put'st forth.

First, it's a signe it is in thee, because when God does convert a sinner, he does not put in new powers and faculties into the soul; he does not put in a new faculty of thinking and understanding, and willing, and affecting, and remembring: No, the soule hath these faculties already, understanding already, and thinking already, and remembring, and desiring already, and willing already; God does not put in new faculties, but turnes them that are there unto himselfe; like a Watch out of frame: the *Wheels* are there still, the *Spring* still, and every parcell there still; but all out of frame, and the Artiste sets them in frame; so the Soule hath them in it; True, it requires the omnipotent power of God to turn all these faculties to him. Notwithstanding thou dost

volun-

Six Arguments to prove it.

1. Argument.

When God comes to work grace, he finds in thee indeed *passiva capacitas*, or *potentia obediensialis*; But thy own naturall faculties are raised to supernaturall acts upon supernaturall objects by God.

Willfull Impenitency

voluntarily turn them unto other things, and not unto God. They are every one in thee, as thou art a man; But God may not have them; nay, and thou mightest put them forth to more then thou dost. Other things can have them superfluously, but God may not have them. (I intend not the power of doing the least good in a gracious manner, nor to engage God to give thee grace only.

2. *Argument.*

Secondly, it's a signe it is in thee. (I mean still so far forth as to demonstrate thee slothfull.) I say it's a signe it is in thee, because thou canst shew a great power otherwise. When a servant can run a race for his sport; why will he not on his Masters errand, when he bids him? It is a signe it is in him, and he will not put it forth. Canst thou not spare an hour every day for private prayer unto God, some time for to meditate and be-labour thy heart? Thou canst spare twice as much for thy belly, and thy back, and thy profits. Canst thou not shed tears for thy sinnes? Thou canst shed tears for madnesse, and wrath, and vexation. Canst thou not tell how to glorifie God? Oh my parts are very shallow, gifts very small, &c. But thou art wise to do evill: They are wise to do evill, but to do good they have no knowledge. It's a signe it is in thee, but thou wilt not. Thou canst not speak for God, thou canst not be angry against sin, nor lay to heart the miseries of Gods Church. No? but thou canst find thy tongue fast enough for to raile and clamour; and thou canst even burst with anger when thou art cross'd. It's a signe it is in thee, a signe there is wit enough in thee, and abilitie enough in thee to take pains. Thou hast it for other things, but thou wilt not put it forth for the Lord. Oh, how does this provoke the most highest? That strangers should devour all thy strength. Like Ephraim, Strangers devoured all his strength. God might have none of it, but strangers and strange lusts could have it; the World can have thy pains; and thy cares, the things of the World they can have thy thoughts and thy strength, and not I, sayes Christ.

Jer. 4. 21.

Hof. 7. 9.

Christ. As a Master complains of his refractory servant, You can do it for your selfe; and do it for others; but you will not do it for me: *a signe it is in thee, but thou wilt not put it forth.*

Thirdly, *a signe it is in thee, for thou canst shew it to whom thou listest*: like a sluggard, that will worke at idle times, so thou canst serve God when thou hast nothing else to do. Like Pharaohs conceit of the Israelites, That they would serve God because they had nothing else to do. Ye are idle, idle yee are, therefore yee say, *Let us go and do sacrifice unto God*: Because they had nothing else to do. So when thou hast nothing

3 Argu.

Exod. 5. 17.

else to do with thy Tongue, then thou canst give it to God; nothing else to do with thy Thoughts, then thou canst thinke of God; when thou hast no use of a lie, then thou canst tell truth. &c. *a signe it is in thee.* It is not the telling of the truth; it is not the speaking very gently and modestly that is nor thee to do; but thou wilt not put it forth; nay, thou canst be soundly provoked while some are in company, and yet still as quiet as may be; *a signe it is in thee.*

Fourthly, *a signe it is in thee, but thou art so sluggish thou wilt not put it forth; because the rod is able to whip it out of thee.* Like a boy that is idle, and can say nothing, yet his Master is able to whip it out of him; then he can say it very roundly. So thou canst not thinke of these things; yet let God lash thee and whip thee with sickness, or with the pangs of death. Then, O, I have been a drunkard, and I have been naught, I have been wicked; and Oh, if God would recover me, I would not for a world sin so as I have done; Then thou canst weep, and then thou canst cry, and then, O for the Minister: *a signe it is in thee, for a rod puts in no new, but only lashes up that which lay there; as the twigs of the rod have no vertue in them to put learning into the Boy; but its a signe it was in him.* Ah, thou wretch thou, thy blood lies on thine owne head; why

4 Argu.

G

then

Prov. 21. 25.

then dost thou not now put thy selfe forth? Thou canst, but Oh, it kils thee to thinke now of taking paines after such things. It kils thee now to go to thy beads, and lie at weeping crosse, and be so holy, forsooth. Oh, it kills thee now to take paines hereabouts; like the sluggard, *the desire of the sluggard kills him, for his hands refuse to labour.* Hee desires to have a crop, but it kills him to go to the Plow; he desires to have his markets, but it kills him to go thither. So thou desirest to go to Heaven, but it kills thee to take paines; Mortification, Selfe-Denyall, Repentance, Humiliation, Examination of Conscience, Reformation of Life; Oh, these kill thee to think of them. A signe much is in thee, but it kills thee to put it forth.

5. Argu.

Fifthly, A signe it is in thee, because thou canst do a hundred times more then when thou art pleased; like a wifull lay servant, thou could do it better if you were pleased; sayes his Master. So long as thou art pleased, thou canst be more religious; a signe it is in thee. Rehoboam his first yeares were religious; *Rehoboam* observes, he was well pleased that same while he saw it was for the *establisshing of his kingdome.* And the *Levites* came to him from *Jeroboam*, so long he was pleased, and then he was religious, but afterwards not; and why not afterwards too? It's a signe it was in him, but he was not well pleased; So *Isaiah* did right in the signe of *Lord* all the daies of *Jeroboam*. Why? then he was well pleased with Religion, for it helped him to root out *Ashabalabs* faction; *Jeroboam* had been the Saviour of his life, the help of him to the Kingdome, the Lord Protector of his Non-age, the establissher of his Stepter. All this while Religion did please him, but afterwards he would not do right in the signe of the Lord. Why? because other things now pleased him better; but it's a signe it was in him. They on the rock, they could heare, and profess as long as the Gospel did please them; they heard it with joy, that pleased them well.

2 Kings 12. 2

Luke 4. 13.

Yee

Yee know joy is a very pleasing thing, and then they could be forward to profess it; a signe it was in them: but in time of affliction and persecution, nay now the Gospel did not please them, and therefore they fall off. So thou canst love a child of God as long as he pleaseth thee, nay thou canst commend him for his holiness; O, its a credit to thee to be acquainted with such a one. But when something does not please thee, then thou canst hate him in thy heart; all these are signes it is in thee, *but thou wilt not put it forth.*

Sixthly, a sign it is in thee, because thou shalt shew it in Hell; where Dives shall shew it was in him to have regarded a godly poor Lazarus, to have respected the salvation of his five brethren: there he shall shew it was in him to fear Hell more then he did. Then the wicked shall say, What hath pride profited us? and what hath riches and means advantaged us? Then they shall see it was in them not to count them for hypocrites, and fools, and mad Men, that were more religious then themselves. *We fools counted their life madness, and we had them in derision; and lo, they are received amongst the Saints, Wisd. 5.3.4.5.* And therefore it is in thee, why then wilt thou not put thy self forth? I say, this will strike you all dumb before God at the last day; *Why would you not put your sel forthves? And how do you stond lazing and idling out the dayes of your own peace!*

Ye cannot have any one excuse.

First, Ye cannot say, *No body hired you*; Indeed, the carefulllest servant in the World must of necessity be idle when none will imploy him; *Why stand you here idle all the day long? No man hath hired us, Lord, Math. 20.6* Marke, they have an excuse that they were never hired into the Vinyard. That was more necessary idleness: but you have been hired; nay, you were hired very early in the morning, and therefore, *why stand you here idle all the day long?*

6 Argu.

Luke 16.28.

No excuse will serve impenitent sinners turn at the last day.

Prov. 24. 23.

Secondly, now thou art in Gods Vineyard, thou canst not say, *I cannot professe*, I cannot profit by hearing, nor profit by praying, &c. Thou canst not say so; for why dost thou not labour? in all labour there is profit. Never did a man labour but some profit or other he did get; but thou wouldst not labour, but thou stoodest lazing and idling. Faine wouldst thou be saved, faine escape Hell and damnation; and oh, that this were to labour for it! Like the sluggard, that desireth a harvest, and yet is idle; *O utinam hoc esset laborare*; He lies loytering and playing, and oh that this were to labour! Oh that this were to plow and to sow! If his Bed were the Plow, and his Pillow the Teame, he would then drive it well. So dost thou, *utinam hoc esset respicere*; thou goest on minding the things of this life, carking and caring, &c. *Utinam hoc esset respicere*; O that this were to repent, and this were to go to Heaven! thou art negligent of Prayer, and Faith, and holinesse, *Christ Jesus save me*; Thus cries the drunkard, *Christ save me*; and thus the worldling, *Christ Jesus forgive me*. Thus like a sluggard thou wishest; O that this were beleeving and serving of God! Like the sluggard, I say, O that this were to labour! thou mightst profit if thou wouldst labour; *in all labour is profit*: but thou wilt not labour, and therefore inexcusable. O what a speechlesse creature shalt thou be before God at the last day! This is the second ground of the Doctrine; The reason why a wicked man does not turne unto God, is not because he *cannot*, but because he *will not*. I say, the ground of it is this,

Every wicked man is slothfull and negligent.

Stir up your selves, ye whose heart the Lord hath awakened; Though the *wicked be slothfull*, *will ye be slothfull also*? O what infinite reason hath the Lord to correct us, every one of us all! *How wofull slothfull are our hearts*! I cannot master my uruly heart, sayes one; and I can-

not

not cast out this same hard hearted *Divel*; Thus we say, like the disciples of *Christ*, we could not cast him out. *O faithlesse Generation, how long shall I be with you,* sayes *Christ*? Cannot cast him out? Why? he could go out by *Preaching and Fasting*. So these same distempers of heart, these frozen hearted *Divels* would go out soone enough by *Fasting and Praying*; but Oh, we are so lazy thereat, and so cold, and so dead, and so drowsie, we do not take pains. There is *teaching in abundance*, and why cannot we learne? There is *miserie enough on the Church*, and why cannot we mourne? There is woe enough a coming, and why cannot we provide for it afore-hand? God will whip out these lazy weeds out of us, if we belong to him; O, it provokes him! as *Vinegar to the Teeth*, and *smoake to the Eyes*, so is the *sluggard to him that sends him*. Ah, thou lazy drone; this 'tis to send a leaden-heeld drone of ones errand; it makes the *Master* looke as *sowrely* on him, as if he had drunke a Portinger of *Vinegar*. So beloved, this our sloth to good things, it does deeply provoke God; there is many a *mercy* we lose, because of our sloth; many a *grace* we never attaine; nay, many a *croffe* and many a trouble do we get by reason of our sloth. Oh, let us stir up our selves and blow up the *sparkes* that are under the embers, or else it will be evill and bitter that God will make us to suffer. And you that live in your sins, let me tell you; ye can never looke for *mercy*, except ye shake off your sloth; ye may desire to be converted, and pardoned, and saved, and so forth; but the soul of the *sluggard* desireth and hath not. But the diligent shall be fatted with grace; but ye may desire all dayes of your life, yet ye shall never have grace, except ye take paines. Nay, your owne reins shall torment you in *Hell*. Oh, how did I idle out my time, and let slip occasions! and I would die, and I would to hell, and I would not do otherwise, and wo is me that ever I was born, &c.

Mar. 9. 19.

Prov. 10. 26.

The

The third Ground.

A wicked man will not set himself to use all the means that he may.

HE is not onely slothfull in the use of the same, nor onely will he not do as much good as he may, but also he will not so much as use the means constantly in any fashion. I cannot, saith he, repent, nor be such a new creature as you talk of; Why then wilt thou not use the means? This makes thee inexcusable. All the whole World, both godly and ungodly, have a cannot; indeed the ungodly their cannot is large and begins sooner, but the godly their cannot is much lessened, and begins further off. The Lord inables them to go further then all the wicked of the World; but beyond that there begins their cannot. I say, all the whole World have their cannot; I call that the means of grace, which is between their Can and their cannot. As Prayers, and hearing the word, and studying, and meditating, &c; The Lord seeing all men in their cannots, hath appointed such means as they can, whereby they are to seek unto God to do that which they cannot. Now a child of God whose cannot is in some measure healed by grace, he can pray in faith, and hear in faith, &c. And therefore Prayer in faith, hearing Gods Word in faith, &c. are his means to get more; he cannot obey more, nor believe more; but he uses these means that he may. But a wicked man his cannot is larger; he cannot pray in faith, and do these in faith, and therefore the faithfull doing of these duties are not his means. I cannot do so, sayes he; No? but thou maist set upon them all, and do them in as good manner as thou canst; that is thy means. Though thou canst not pray in faith, yet thou canst set up constant Prayers in thy Family though, such as they are.

Thou

Liberum arbitrium liberatum.

Thou canst not confer *with grace*, but thou canst confer *about grace* every day; thou canst not repeat the Word to thy Household in faith, but thou canst repeat it in as good a manner as thou art able, *that is thy means*. Now if thou wilt not use the means, thou stickest at a *will not*; and when thou dost *perish*, thou must thank thine own *will*, thou stickst at a *will not*. The first question Christ asks thee is this, What canst thou do? As when the sons of Zebedee begg'd to sit one on the right hand, and the other on the left, this they could not, except God did vouchsafe them a new gift. But what can ye do, sayes Christ? *Are ye able to drink of the Cup that I am to drink off, and be Baptized with the Baptism that I am Baptized with?* We are able, say they, *Mat. 26. 22, 23. Ye shall indeed drink*; &c. Marke he puts them to do that which they can, and then bids them leave that which they cannot unto God. I say, the first question Christ asks thee is, What canst thou do? I cannot be a Saint, Lord help me to mercy, &c. Yea, but what canst thou do? Canst thou not use these and these means I appoint thee? *If thou wilt not do them, neither will I help thee*. This is the nature of means, to be a means to that which one cannot; A child of God can pray in faith, but hee cannot master such a lust; and therefore he prayeth in faith that he may. He can hear the word preached in faith, but he cannot get his heart to it as he would; and therefore he heareth in faith that he may. Doing these in faith are the means; now this is not the means of the wicked, for they cannot do any thing in faith; but their means is to fer about them, at least that they may. I cannot pray in faith, sayst thou: yea, but thou canst set up constant Prayers in thy Family though, such as they are; thou canst not cast off thy sins in faith, thou mayst cast them off though; a godly man may do these things in faith, and therefore that is his means. But that which is his can, is thy cannot; and that which is his means, thou must use means

Note.

unto

This con-
founds the He-
lena, of the Ar-
mini ans.

INTRO. Thou must pray that thou mayst pray in faith; re-
peat the Word that thou mayst repeat it in faith; re-
form thy life that thou mayst reform it in faith; and
seek the Lord that thou mayst seek him in faith. Now
if thou wilt not set upon the means, thou stickest at a
will not; I confess here is the difference, the godly have a
promise upon their using of the means, they using them in
faith; but thou hast no promise, yet who knowes what God
may do? As the King of Nimrich said, lets cry mightily
to God; lets cast away these and these sins, who knowes
if God will turn and repent? Jon. 3. 9. he had no promise,
he could not tell whether God would forgive. He would
set upon the means, he would cry mightily, and it hit
well, for God spared the City: if thou wilt not set upon
the means, thou dost wilfully perish. And here I cleared
two things: 1. That God appoints every man the
means that he may use; he may use those means that
God commands him as means. 2. That if he will not, he does
wilfully perish.

Arguments to prove a wicked man may use the means
that God appointeth as means.

I cannot heare the preaching of the Word, sayst
thou; I am deafe, I cannot hear Sermons; then that
is not thy means; reading which thou canst, and me-
ditating which thou canst, is thy means. Every man
may use the means that God does appoint him as
means.

1. Argu.

Media.

First, because its the very nature of means to come be-
tween ones Can and his Cannot and therefore they are cal-
led media, because they come in the midst between a
mans can and his cannot. By what means may I go up
to London? flying in the Aire is not my means. No,
that is a Brides means and not mine, for I cannot do it;
but my means is going if I have leggs, or riding, if they
be not able; or carrying, if I cannot ride. Every mans

medium

mediums

mediams come in between that which he *can* and that which he *cannot*, and he is to use them, that that which he cannot he may be *inabled* to do.

Secondly, because God does not exhort men like a company of stockes and stones, but as men that are edifiable by his word. If there were no means they could possibly use, they were like stockes and stones. If they had no *eyes* as means to let it in, no *understanding* as means to conceive it; no power of *willing* at least to let about it, then wee should preach to a company of stockes. There must be some means propounded, that men are inabled to use. (though by any power of their owne they cannot do it graciously) or else as good preach to a company of stockes. Now God protests he draws men as men may be drawne; *I draw them with the cords of a man. Hos. 11. 4.* That is, with such cords as a man may be drawne with; not like a company of stockes and of stones: if ye have but the carnall reason of a man, these cords they would draw you. God drawes you like men, with the cords of a man; indeed, in the quickning of the heart, and in the point of repentance, a man is no more active then a stone. But when he drawes you to the means, he drawes you like men, and therefore ye may come if you will, and if ye be but men, these cords are cords to draw men.

2. *Argu.*

Thirdly, because Gods anger is very reasonable; when a Master is angry with a servant, that may do a thing and yet will not, we call his anger a very reasonable anger. I know Gods anger is very reasonable for things which thou canst not, because once he gave thee power; but when he commandeth the means, now his anger is very reasonable. We our owne selves count this anger very reasonable in the like case; what will he not do it? No, nor use the means for to do it? Would not this anger any body, say we? So, for these things sake comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience; Eph. 5. 6. That is, for adultery, for fornication, for

3. *Argu.*

H vaine

vaine words, and vaine hopes to be saved; for *these things* comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. He does not say, for not being renewed, for not being converted; but for *these things* comes the wrath of God forth. He's angry for *that*, but his wrath comes generally forth upon men for *these things*, because they will not use the means: They will not give over those sins which are the hinderances to conversion; this is very reasonable. If a man were not able to do it, there would be some shew at least of unreasonableness in Gods anger; but there is not any shew of unreasonableness in his anger, when men will not buckle to the means which they may. When God commanded the Egyptians to submit and to be humbled, they would not; he commanded them at least to use the means, *to let his people go*, and they would not: you shall see how the Text layes his anger now was very reasonable. There is a sweet phrase, *Psal. 78. 50. He made a way to his anger*; in the Hebrew 'tis, *He weighed a path to his anger*. He weighed it in a balance; Mark how reasonably and proportionably God is angry. He puts his anger and mens finnes in a balance, and weighs out the right measure of anger. When a servant forceth a Master to be angry whether he will or no, he cannot complaine his Masters anger is *unreasonable*; hee may go of his errands, and he *will not*; he *may* do this business, and he *will not*: if he cannot do the business a selfe, yet he may use the means, and *will not*. Now, his Masters anger is very reasonable, because he forceth him to be angry; *As the churning of Milk bringeth forth butter, so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife. Pro. 30. 33.* He does even churn his Masters passions, and he forces the same; as a churmer forceth the Milk to become Butter, so he forces ones kindnesses to become anger; and therefore the anger is *very reasonable*. So God is very reasonable in his anger: wilt thou not use the means to be quickned? Suppose thou

thou canst not quicken thy selfe, but wilt thou not see about the means? This turneth the Lords anger, and his anger is very reasonable.

Fourthly, Gods offer of his Kingdome to the wicked is serious; if they were senseless and quite dead, and could do nothing, his offer were not serious: should a man offer a hundred pound to a dead carcass, here is a hundred pound for you; if you'll take it, I'll give it you. This offer were not serious, because the dead carcass is not able to stir, but is senseless. True, in matter of conversion it self, a man is as dead as a carcass. Nevertheless he is not absolutely a dead carcass to all use of the means; he hath the life of nature, and reason, and of sense; and therefore when God offers his Kingdome in the means, *this offer is serious.* Turn you at my reproofe; behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, Prov. 1.23. He speaks there even of Reprobates and all, and he seriously offers them his spirit; and therefore they might have gone about the means, but they would not; *Vocatio Dei est seria*, as our Divines do all say; and therefore the means he appointeth may be used.

4 Argu.

Fifthly, because Gods reproofs are very equall. Should a man reprove a cripple for not running, this reproofe were not equall, because he is not able to do it. I grant, when God reproves the wicked for being sinful, such reproofes are all equall, though they be not able to be without sin: but then equality is grounded upon something before, namely, upon their voluntary apostacy and inability in Adam. But when God reproves them for not setting about the means, his reproofes then are very equall, and the equality is grounded upon their wilfulness present. Will ye not fear me, sayes God? I do this and this; marke, his reproofe is very equall. God reproves Israel for not observing his Statutes, saying, The Statutes of Omri are kept, Mic. 6.16. You can observe his Statutes; why cannot you set about mine? he sets up a Temple, you can go constantly to it, why cannot you

5 Argu.

Note.

go constantly to mine? The reproofe was very equall. If thou wilt not set upon the means, thou art most equally condemned. I cannot preach so often as some do, nor be so much resident as some are. No? Why wilt thou not give over one of thy two Livings then? Thou art able to do that: If thou'lt not set upon the means, thy condemnation is equall. Thus I have confirmed this first Point, namely, *That the wicked may use those means that the Lord commands them, at means.*

In the second place I shewed that this being thus, *thy condemnation must be wilfull, if thou wilt not use all the means.*

Arguments to prove it.

I. Argu.

First, *The Lord will not helpe that man by a miracle to go, that hath legs to go, and will not.* Thou sayest, thou wouldst faine go to Heaven, tell me, What legs hath God given thee? What means hath he lent thee? If thou wilt not use them, the Lord will never help thee without. Had the *Israelites* had any means to have gotten over *Jordan*, as Ships or Barkes, Boates, or Bridges, or Fords, and they would not, hee would never have helpt them over without. You know how the Lord parted the waters, *Josh. 3. 13.* but if they had refused the means, he would not have help'd them on this manner without: if they had food sufficient in the *Wildernesse* to eat, and they would not, he would not have rained food downe upon them. Had they had Shoemakers and Drapers, and cloth sufficient to come by, and they would not, he would never have miraculously help'd the garments from wearing. It's a tempting of God, when thou hast the means, and wilt not be diligent in them, to desire God to helpe thee without, thou wouldst have thy children Gods children, thy family Christs family; then use the means. Set up the

con-

constant invocation of Gods Name, Morning and Evening among them; set up Reading, set up Catechising, and every good thing: or thou canst never expect to be holy, and heavenly; then use the means; Talk of Heaven in thy meetings, reason about grace, inquire of good souls, and how may I come by an humble heart? How may I get faith, and be led by the spirit? If thou wilt not be constant in the use of the means, thy prayers to God are nothing but temptings. Thou art troubled with by-thoughts; thou sayst, thou wouldst faine be delivered there-from; then use the means, be not so long without God every hour, pray every day oftner, strive in the duty the harder; if thou wilt not use the means, God will never help thee without. Thou art full of thy doubtings, thou sayst thou heartily desirest to be freed; then use the means, or thou lyeest: give over thy broad walking, thy broad acquaintance; those that have no more holiness in them then the stock are thy bosomest friends. If thou wilt not use the means, God will never assure thee without, nor convert thee without; if Devils his five brethren will not heare Moses and the Prophets, they shall have no miracle from the dead, Luke. 16. 18. if God lend thee the means, he will not save thee without.

Note.

Secondly, God will not bate thee a farthing off the price he sets thee at; when a Tradesman hath once set his lowest price, he will not go lower. Now the use of the means are Gods lowest price; the Lord will not bate a farthing of that; wherefore is a price put into the hand of a fool? Pro. 17. 16. The means of grace are this price, and the price is in thy hands; when the Lord vouchsafes thee the means, hee'l not bate thee a farthing of this price. He sets this price on his mercies and graces, thou must use all the means; not as though grace might be valued; no, it exceeds all prices; or as though grace were not free; Yea, its free and without price: its fit though that this price should be set upon the alms, that the poud beggar should choose to receive it; if thou wilt not give

2. Argu.

give the price that God hath put into thy hand, thou art worthy to mis it. I will give so much, and labour so much, and pray so much, and reform so much; No, no; that will not do; Christ will have cother odd penny too; thy *filthy speaking* must off, and thy *base passions* and *old courses* must off, hee'l have thee stoop to all his holy means. Wouldest thou have it cheaper? Mine own children and Saints never had it cheaper; not *Abraham*, *Isaac*, nor *Jacob*, nor *Paul*, they were faine to use *all holy means*, to abandon every lust, to set up every duty, invocation in their families, meditation in their hearts, examination in their consciences, holy communication in their mouthes; none of my Saints had it cheaper. And thou makest a mock of them for praying so much, and professing so much, so much hearing, and so much gadding after Sermons, &c. Well, well, I'll not bate thee one duty, not one lust, nor one carnall desire, I'll have thee set about all, or thou shalt never have mercy. Yea, but I cannot find in my heart to put up this, nor to be abridged of this. And shall *Christ* and *thou* part for one *single farthing*? Perish then, and go and thank thine own *will* for it in Hell. God is resolved upon this price, and this is the lowest.

3. Argu.

Thirdly, *God will never be brought out of his walke*; thou canst never look that God should come out of his walke to shew thee any mercy, or give thee any grace. Now the way wherein God walkes is the means of grace, and of salvation; There thou must look for God, or thou canst have no hope for to find him. Suppose a poor *Petitioner* should come with his petition to the *King*; he can never look to have the King come down hither to *Rockford* to grant it him; No, he must go up to the King. The King is at Court at *White-Hall*; and there he may have him; if he will not go thither, he is willful; and if his petition be not granted, he may thank his own will. But so thou canst not look to fetch God out of his own walke.

the

the means of grace and salvation: Endeavour to obey him; prayings, seekings, &c. these and other means of salvation are his walke; these are the wayes wherein they must wait to find God; if they would have him; *In the way of thy judgment have we waited for thee.* Isa. 26.8. There the godly wait for the Lord, in the way where his walke is; he will not be spoken with, but only there in his walke. If thou wilt not seeke him there, thou mayst thank thine own will, if thou missest him; ye that are negligent to hold out in Gods wayes, ye can never look to find mercy while ye live. Pray for mercy, and cry for mercy, and grone for mercy, ye must look to perish without it, if ye will not seek it in his wayes; you'll seek him in some, but you will not seek him in all; assure your selves, then you shall miss of him. Do you think the King will come to you, to grant your petitions? you must go up to him, and take him where he is to be spoken with. *God will not be spoken with but only in his wayes;* the Jews received Sacraments enough, every meales meat is as a new Sacrament in the Wilderness; afterwards they prayed prayers enough; but I will not heare you, sayes God. Never tell me of your seeking for mercy; *Wash you, make you clean, put away from you the evil of your doing, learn to do well;* come now and let reason together; if you sinne as he do, seek an Squaller, I'll whiten them. Now hee'll be spoken with; if you will come hither. What, not erect his seate up in thy family? not give over thy base carnall comforts? keep such disorders under thy rooſe, and in thy life? sweats still? and give place to the Drinell still? A cursed passions still? mock at my children still? Dost thou walke in these wayes, and hope to find good? No; as good cut off a dogges neck; as give him sacrifice of prayers; as long as you walke in your own wayes: *Esay 66.3.* You must seek him in the wayes that he walke in, and not chuse your own wayes; hee'll never come out of his way for any

Note.

Isa. 1.18.

any of you all; what shall I do Lord; *says Saul?* he would faine have spoken with God there. No, no; go to *Amantia*; &c. if thou wilt not seek him in his way, thou art well served if thou missest him.

I beseech you consider this point, you can never look to be saved, except you'll set your selves to do what you may, and use all those means that you may; for though the use of the means does not save you, yet they are the way; though not *causa regnandi*, yet *via regni*; and if you will not constantly use them, you can never have his Kingdom.

Reasons of it.

First, because Heaven is an end, and an end can never be gotten without means: the end is eternall life, *Rom.*

6. eternall life is an end, and therefore except the means be all used, you can never attain it.

Secondly, God hath appointed us to the means; all Heaven and Earth can never separate them; either use all the means that God hath appointed, or else he hath decreed it ye shall never be saved. When he hath once appointed these and these shall be your means, these shall you use for it, ye shall never be saved without them.

When God hath appointed their abiding in the shipa means of their escape, you shall see what *Paul* says, *Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved Act. 27.* So tis for Heaven, except ye abide in the means, ye cannot be saved.

Thirdly, Every soul must give an account before God how he hath used the means. Whether he hath used them all, yea or no. And according as the account is, he can give, so shall his judgment be. God hath sworn this. *As I live, saith the Lord;* God hath pawned his own life upon this, that thus it shall be. *As I live, saith the Lord, every sinne shall have its pay; and every tongue shall confesse to God, every one of us, all shall give an account unto God;* *Rom. 14. 11; 12.* every one of us, God

will

will exempt none, we must all be brought to an account for these things; will not thy heart bow to it? As I live saith the Lord, I'll make every knee bow to it, I'll make you bow or I'll break you for ever; as we do doubt as not, for ye shall give an account whether ye have done it or no.

Fourthly, beloved, *God will not sit up under any tree in Heaven for any man in the World*, either come in at this or you shall never come in. He'll never make another Bible, either be ruled by this or by none, He'll never change out another way, either goe this way or chuse and perish in thy wilfulness. The drunkards way shall never be his way, the worldlings way shall never be his, nor the law Gossellers his, nor the careless professors his. He'll never change wayes, nor are my wayes to be changed. For ye shall stand your wayes, *Lev. 23* and come into his way, or ye shall never escape, the evil is come, can there be any reasonable way then this?

First, *Some of the means that God hath appointed you way doe them, without them your wayes doe hang with nothing* but thy I will, and it is done? What reason is there say, company keepers shall not sit drinking in my house? There is here an Alehouse in your Towne, but if they will, may loose out disorders from their houses, their own wills doe destroy them. Is no labour in the World to doe this, and will ye not doe it? *Psalm 140* and *Psalm 141* your own wills.

Secondly, *Some of the means that God hath appointed you suffer them*; only that you would give way to another to doe them; may be the wife would have prayers in the family if the husband would give way. The Minister would teach you if you would give way. The Lord Jesus might worke many things in you. If you would give way, this *is a life that is will*. You that have good Wives, who would reforme sundry things if you would give way, &c. I beseech you apply it particularly to your

Psalm 140

Psalm 141

Psalm 142

slide 301 out of 316

salves, your ruine will full if yee yeild not, and will not give way, it will not be saved.

Thirdly, *Some of the means are too strict*, for some of the means of grace are better for you even in your world-
to be used all while. You say, that is the easiest of all for a man to favour himselfe, and his flesh. As for example, the reforming of your gaming, dicing, crotching in your houses, your drunkenness and beezeling o're the pot, your pride and your gaggawes, and the like: would not this favour your quicke, and be more agreeable to your very carnall respects? And therefore you that doe not reforme in these your sinfull perdition on your heads.

Fourthly, *Some of the means of grace, its harder to omit than others* as use them. Many of you meet with more hardships in the commission then you could light upon in the practice of them. I need not instance, the particulars are very familiar.

Fifthly, *Some of the means of grace, be they hard, yet they are but hard*; they are not impossible for you to use; They will take no more then a little labour and diligence, and therefore omitted only by reason of will.

I have by this time you see clearly the truth of this ground. If you will not, by your selves, to use the means of grace and salvation, when ye die, you must needs lay the blame on your will. And why will yee so? Why will yee die, O house of Israel?

But notwithstanding the evidence of this truth, *The wisdom of the flesh which is enmity against God, fills carnall minds with many objections against it*; from all which I shall endeavour to vindicate it, by answering them all in order.

1 Object.

The first Objection is drawne from those Scriptures which say that they cannot.

2 Object.

From their own willingness, they would, but they cannot.

3 Object.

Is from their own desires, they desire to doe it, but they are not able.

Is from their resolutions they purpose, but whether they will or no, they are faine to breake their good purpose.

Is from their good endeavour (as they say) they labour against their faines, and yet they are overcome into them, so faine before they are smart, as to overcome in any way.

We will answer them in order.

As to the first Objection from the Scriptures, which say they cannot, I answer,

Indeed the Scripture speaks of five Cannots.

First, *Of a naturall cannot*; every man is borne by nature under a cannot believe, and a cannot see. Gods But there is difference between such cannots, and they do not repeat, there is difference in the object. The cause of the cannots is differing, and the cause of the first not is another. The cause of the cannot is the carnallness of nature, but the cause of the first not is the mischance of the will. The naturall man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, which are wisdom for they are spiritually discerned, as Grace, not which the Apostle makes a different cause of a naturall cannot, and his other, when he speaks of his cannot, he tells us the cause of that is, because grace is spiritual and he is carnall. Neither indeed can he, because they are spiritually discerned, but where he speaks of his cannot, you see he alledges a different cause of his cannot. The naturall man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, they are foolishness unto him, he cannot them all foolishly. He is foolishly in his own carnall reason, that he counteth folly to deny in, thou canst not do that and thus dost thou say it. Why then wilt thou count it folly to do so? when a man crosses thee of thy will, thou countest it folly to put it up. I were a fool if I should be so precise as thou art, and were a fool if I should oppose a single disorder in my house, be long as I gain by it.

4 Object.

5 Object.

1 Object.

answered.

There are five Cannots in Scripture.

1 Cannot.

*Cecus est et
palpebras
claudis.*

3 Cannot.

11. This is *willfull blindness*; this, and not a *cannot*, is a cause of thy *Idleness*. Thou canst not indeed because thou art carnall, but thy cannot is dead and not operative; thy will is the cause of thy does not. Like the *willfull blind man*, he was blind and would not open his eye-lids. He could not see, but his cannot was *dead*, for he would not open his eye-lids (his cannot is not operative) till he will open his eye-lids. If he could see, yet he could not till he would open his eye-lids, so thou wilt not open thine eye-lids.

Secondly, the Scripture speaks of a *deliberate cannot*, when a man cannot do a thing, *swely because he cannot finde in his heart to do it*. Thou canst not repent of this and that sinne and forsake it, the truth is; thy cannot is this thou canst not finde in thy heart to *forget* it. Such a course is so profitable and pleasing to thy flesh, thou canst not finde in thy heart to abandon it, thou canst not find in thy heart to be friends with such a one; to part with thy vanities, or to abridge thy selfe of thine angry speeches when thou art stirred, &c. Thou canst not find in thy heart to do for us the *Jewes*, you cannot believe, sayes Christ, because ye *will* believe one of another, *Joh. 5. 44.* they would faine be well thought of, of all their acquaintance; and therefore they could not finde in their heart to believe in Christ. Oh that would make thee to be out of favour with the *Pharisees*, and to be counted basely of in the World: Therefore they could not find in their heart to believe; now this is no excuse; thou canst not turne unto God, thou canst not find in thy heart to part with thy lusts; this is thy cannot.

3 Cannot.

Thirdly, the Scripture speaks of a *judiciall cannot*, as a *rogue cannot goe*, because for his *ignoring the Magistrate* hee hath him in the stocks; This does not excuse that one yet, shall the villaine be willfull in his loytering, and then complaine of the Magistrate that he is not able to goe about his worke? I cannot goe about my worke sayesthe, and who bad him be so idle as not to goe about

it

it, when he might? Thou haſt gone on may be wilfully in thy ſinner, and now the Lord hath inſiſted a judiciall cannot unto thee. Thou canſt not come out of thy ſinner, nay the Lord hath caſt this cannot upon thee in Judgement; he hath ſet thee in the ſtocks for thy wilfull ſecurity. As the wicked Jewes they could not believe ſayes the Text, becauſe Iſaiah ſaith, he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, Iob. 12. 39, 40. could they excuſe themſelves for their cannot? No the Lord hath ſet them in the ſtocks for their wilfulneſſe and ſecurity? They could not believe, for they had wilfully provoked the Lord to caſt this cannot upon them in judgement.

Fourthly, the Scripture ſpeakes of a compounded cannot. A cannot in ſenſu compoſito as we call it, a cannot in a compounded ſence. As a Drunkard cannot tender his family, his poore Wife and children. No; as long as he lies blaſpheming on the Ale-bench, he cannot in a compounded ſence he cannot. Ariſtotle ſaith it out by ſitting; he that is ſitting cannot walke, that is as long as he is ſitting he cannot walke. As Chriſt ſaith of a ſmall man he cannot be my Diſciple; he cannot in a compounded ſence; he that commeth to me, and haue not father and mother, and wife and children, yes and his owne life, cannot be my Diſciple, Luke 14. 26. he cannot indeed as long as he ſtands upon theſe termes, My father will not love me, and my mother will not like me; if I ſhould be one of your Diſciples, my friends would hate owne me: I muſt doe as I doe or I cannot keepe my wife and children. Indeed as long as thou ſtandſt on theſe termes thou canſt not be a Diſciple of Chriſt; thou canſt not in a compounded ſence; but if thou wouldſt diuide it thou mightſt; no man can ſerue two maſters, Mat. 6. 24. marke compound them together and he cannot. But if he would give over one, he might ſerue the other, thou canſt not thou ſayeſt. No; I yeld thee in a compounded ſence thou canſt not, thou canſt not as long as thou art thus careleſſe as thou art, as long as thou ſervuſt thy ſelfe in ſuch and ſuch liſts, thou canſt not: The

4 Cannot.

*Impoſſibile eſt
ſedentem am-
bulare.*

compo

Note.

5 Cannot.

compounding of thy sinnes and laxing of Religion, that is the reason why thou canst not, this is it that makes our prayers hard, and our repentings hard, our believings and all our performances hard, because we would faine be countounding. We have much adoe to Pray, but hearts can hardly be brought to wrestle, much adoe to be humbled, our wills will hardly stoop: If it were not for these countounding, these duties were easie. And what excuse hath thou hence? none at all, for thou cannot, onely in the countounded sense that thou makest it.

Fifthly, the Scripture speaks of a *humbling cannot*, I cannot not to bowe thee up in thy excuses, but onely to humble thee, that thou mayest be driven out of thy selfe unto God. A servant cannot live except it be his Masters pleasure to take pittie on him: Is this any pretence to him to anger his Master? or to be negligent of his Masters commands? nay rather is forsooth him to be so much the more carefull to obey him, and to be humble before him. So the Scripture says, that thou canst not without God, except God show mercy on thee, to convert thee and save thee, thou canst not be accepted of him. *All this is to humble thee, not to help thee with excuses.* Thus I cannot doe as his Ministers doe bid me, I cannot mortifie these sinns, I cannot be so strict, this is too much piteousness you speake of. *O mortifie not, this cannot be, onely to humble thee, since man will sinne, yett felow Newman can come to us, except the father draw him.* John 6. 44. This is no reason why thou shouldst murmur or cavill, or be lubborne as thou art, thou canst not come at Christ except the father take pittie on thee to draw thee. Thou hast so much the more reason to be humble, and not to goe on wittingly and wilfully as thou dost. Canst thou not be holy, and saved, except he be pleased to pittie thee? in what a wofull case then art thou to provoke him as thou dost? So much shall suffice for the first Objection drawn out of the Scripture.

The second thing thou objectest, is thy wilfulness: thou wouldst

wouldst as thou pretendst, but thou canst not.

Answer thee for this.

First, may be in the will of thy conscience, and not the will of thy heart: thy heart is carnall and unacquainted with God, and so its contented to be, onely thy conscience would have thee grow better and more heavenly; but thy heart will not yeild: and therefore all thy wil- lings are nothings but deludings: they are onely the wil- lings of conscience and not of thy heart. Thou art cha- ling and fretting every foot, thy conscience tells thee thou shouldst not, thou art praying carnally every day: when thou hast done, conscience says thou shouldst pray holier then so, conscience would but thou wilt not, conscience would have thee get assurance for Heaven, but thou wilt not be as the pained. Alas, this makes thee inexorable, for now thou condemnest thy self, and yet wilt fight: thou art inexcusable. O man whosoever thou art that judgest for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy self. Rom. 2. 13. marke, when a man condemneth himselfe he is then inexcusable. (I doe not now quote it for the particular the Apostle does instance in there for judging another) for the truth is the same, whatsoever since we doe instance in, the truth is this that Paul grounds his speech on. He that condemneth himselfe in a sinne, and yet will go on in it, that man is inexcusable. What now hast thou gotten by thy plea? thou wouldst, thou sayest: this makes thy heart to be worse in that thy con- science would, and yet for all that thou wilt not.

Secondly, may be in a copulative will: thou hast a will to repent and be goodly, but it is with a copulative will. Repentance and such lust, godliness and such lust: thou wouldst faine please the Lord and thine own lust too, be religious and proud too, believe in Christ and covet too, and be vaine too, &c. Thou hast a will, but it is a copulative will, to serve God and do this too: Pish, cannot I serve God and do this too: No, no; this same copulative will is a flat contradiction. Couple light and dark-

2. Object.
answered.

Note.

: evil

darknesse? *Christ and Belial*, a *Cor. 6. 15.* Its a contradiction to imagine to couple them, for they cannot possibly be coupled. And therefore this same copulative will is nothing, but a *mockery*, and the truth still is this *thou wilt not?*

Thirdly, May be thou hast a *woulding will*, *this is no will, but onely a velleity*; so thou hast a woulding will. I would doe as well as any other but I cannot; to speake properly this is no will, for its onely that will where-*with feales will things impossible*; I would I were at *London*, with a wife sayes he; I would I could die as well as an *Eagle*. These things are impossible, and therefore its no will, but meere folly; thus may be thou wiltst grace, I would with all my heart I could doe as God sayes, *God knowes my heart, my will is good*, I would be better then I am; And yet thy conscience can call for something or other to be mended, and thou wilt not. This is an impossibility, and therefore no will; like the foole that would sit in his chaire, and I would I were at *London*, he would faine be at *London* and sit still. So thou sittest at the same pisse; *I would I were in Christ*; thou wouldst faine be in Christ, and yet thou art loth to stir out of that base temper thou art in. This is an impossibility, a folly and no will; *woulding and no willing*. I grant the Saints of God have these wouldings, and their would does goe further then their will; *their will is the felicity for to be holy*, and they would be holy. Their will is deeply to be humbled, and they would be deeper; their *would is grounded upon a will*, they will in some measure and they would goe further. I will, oh that I could will more. But thou that liest in thy sinfull estate, *thy would is pure folly*. A would grounded upon a will not is foppish; the Saints *would is grounded upon a will*; but thine, *thou wilt not at bottom is this thou wilt not*.

Lazy velleities
no will.

Note.

Fourthly, may be thou hast a *generall metaphysicall will*, but to come to *particulars*, there *thou wilt not*. I hate the Saints of God? God forbid? Ple never hate them while I live;

live; and yet come to this Saint and that Saint; *him thou wilt hate; him?* He is the veriest hypocrite in the Country, and keepe more adoe then needs. Thus thy will is good to a company of metaphysicall Saints in the clouds; but those that are Gods *Saints in particular, thou mockest*. I be stubborne against the Commandements of God? I will not be stubborne against them; yea but *this and that Commandement thou wilt not observe*. Thou wilt not thinke best of them of whom thou shouldst; nor take up that carriage in meetings that thou shouldst; thou hast a good will to the Commandements in *affection*, but thy will stands against the *particulars of them*. *Generalls are but Notions, when they are abstracted from the particulars*. And therefore thy will is but a *Notion: the will* when it willethe indeed, willethe *particulars*, this *particular duty*, this *particular Ordinance*. Indeed good in the *generall* is the *object of the will*, but when the will comes to will in the *exercise of it*, it *pitcheth on particulars*.

Fifthly, thou hast *no true will*, I speake still to the carnall, I say thou hast no true will, because if thou *truely didst will, thou couldst*; if thou didst truely will to believe, and will to be a new creature thou couldst; for the will it hath *potentiam executivam* so farre as it will, &c. It hath an executing power to goe so far as it will; if thou didst truely and really will to speake holy, thy will would make thy tongue to put it in execution. If thou hadst a will, thy will would command execution, *my tongue shall speake the praise of the Lord*, sayes David, *Psal. 119. 171, 172. my soule it shall praise thee, vers. 175*. I grant the wounding of the will goes further then all execution can goe, *to will is present with me, but how to performe that which is good, I find not*, *Rom. 7. 18*. I quote this place the rather, because many wrest it to their own destruction. Oh sayes a wicked man, I have a good will, I would as *Paul* sayes, *but I cannot performe*, thus men mis-interpret this place, for looke how far *Paul* would, he could performe, for the will hath *potentiam executivam* and an imperative force over

When carnall men can discover no other blemish in the Saints, then they charge them with hypocrisie.

Hic ego sed vi
 dit meo non
 in hoc meo
 estis mihi
 non
 equis me
 et dicit me
 . . .

the man. What he did will, he did performe, he performe
 it in his heart, and tongue, and hand, &c. but he would
 draw his will forwarder then it was, but he could not,
 his very will was partly unwilling, he could not indeed
 performe so much as he would, that is, he could not
 draw on his will so strongly as he would. His will was
 not perfectly sanctified, no Saint in this World hath any
 perfect complacencie of will, and therefore his perfor-
 mance is not perfect, because his will is not perfect. I say,
 if thy will be converted to God, thou thy self art con-
 verted to God, obedience ever goes as farre as the will.
 And therefore if thou art willing; it is certaine thou art obe-
 dient; if ye be willing and obedient sayes the Text, Isa.
 54. who so ever is willing to obey, that man does obey,
 in some measure, because the will hath power of executi-
 on; and the whole man at command. This is the reason
 why Doctors say, that the finis of the will is the condi-
 tion of the S. spell; wherefore if thou beest not obedient, nei-
 ther art thou willing to obey, all the powers of thy soule
 and all the members of thy body, thy will hath an *actus*
imperatorum to command them. Now if thy will will not
 command them to yield, thou art not so much as wil-
 ling at all. If a Justice of Peace should tell me he would
 give me a Warrant, and yet when all comes to all, he will
 not command his clerke for to write it, nor his owne
 hand for to pen it, & he plainly he will not. Dost thou
 say, I would obey Christ, and I would deny selfe, why then
 dost thou not command thy Clerke for to write it? If thy will
 will not command tongue, Tongue thou shalt never talke
 so unprofitably as thou hast done; and I hope thou shalt
 never hearken after vanity as thou hast done; and
 thoughts, *Thoughts*; ye shall never run at rovers as ye have
 done. If your will were but willing, it would command your
 whole soule, Soule thou shalt not die as thou hast done; as Pa-
 tricke will command his soule, O my soule, blesse the Lord,
 and singe unto him all his benefites, Psal. 103. 2. Nay he com-
 mended all that was in him, all that is in me, blesse his holy

Name,

Name, verse 1. So if thou wert willing, thy will would command all thy soule; soule, thou shalt not be so fel-
dome at the throne of grace as thou art; &c. thus much
of the second objection drawn from the will, say of thou
wert willing, thou wilt be able to have nothing that thou wilt
not have.

Objection the third. But thou desirest to do it, and therefore thou dost not sticke at
it. *a will not.*

I answer thee, who can tell best what is in thee? God or
thine own heart? verily the Lord that did make it, is like-
liest to know best. Now the Lord sayes peremptorily
thou desirest not grace; yea and thy heart sayes it too,
and the Lord heares it, though thou hearest it not; they
say unto God depart from us, *we desire not his knowledge*
of thy wayes, Iob, 21. 14. Nevertheless, because thou stan-
dest so stoutly upon it, that thou dost desire grace, I'll
tell thee the reason of thy mistake.

First, thou hast putative or thinking desires, thou thin-
k'st thou desirest, and therefore thou art mistaken; like
Seneca's young scholar, that said he desired to be good: I
doe not say, saith he, he lies, but *putas se cupere*, He thinkes
he desires; so thou sayest thou desirest. I will not say thou
lyest, but thou think'st thou dost so; now alas thy thoughts
are the vainest things in the world. *How long shall vain
thoughts be Judge within thee. Ier. 4. 14.* thy thoughts are
very vain, there is no trusting to them. *Naaman* thought,
I thought, saith he, but how wide his thought was the
story declares. *Haman* thought, he thought in his heart, sayes
the Text, but his thoughts came to nothing but a Gal-
lowse and a Halcer. *Isobabnos* thought, but you know
what his thoughts did come unto; it fell fowle on his
own head, nothing is more vain then the thoughts of
carnall mens hearts: so thou thinkest thou desirest; alas
thy thought is but vanity.

Secondly, thou hast ignorant desires, thou dost desire
to be one of Gods Saints, thou desirest it ignorantly, for

3 Object.
answered.

Vanity of
thoughts.
2 Kings 5. 31.

Efter 6.6.

when thou comest to see who the Saints be, namely, such and such whom thou conceivest to be strange people and Puritans, then thou hast no desire to be one. Thou desirest to goe *after Christ*, thou dost *ignorantly desire it*, for when thou seest thou *must take up his crosse*, then thou hast *no desire* thereunto; as the Prophet speakes of Christ in the person of the wicked: when we shall *see him*, *there is no beauty that we should desire him*, Esay 53. 2. thou desirest with ignorant desires before thou seest who he is; but when thou seest who he is, thou dost not desire him. Thou desirest his grace, thou *desirest to believe* and repent, and to *put up injuries*, these are ignorant desires before thou seest what they be; but when thou seest what they be, what the *injury* is that thou shouldst put up, then thou dost not *desire to put it up*; what the *sinne* is that thou shouldst leave, then thou dost *not desire* for to leave it; when thou seest them, then thou dost not desire them. When we shall see him, there is no beauty *that we should desire him*.

Thirdly, thou hast *wandering desires*. Oh saith one, you have a happy turne, you have good Preaching, and good meanes to be godly, and be edified. I desire to be so; but alas our Minister does not Preach, and we have a *dumbe dogge*; and I am in a very wicked place, If I were as you are, I should count my selfe happy. God knowes, I desire heartily the edification of my soule; thus thy desires *wander after other mens cases*; and thou wilt not stirre out for *thine owne*. Now dost thou desire to be edified, when thou wilt not stir out two or three miles to be edified? Thy desires are like *wandering vagrants*, that will be every where wandering, but only there where they *should be*. So thy desires goe roving up and *downe*, and you are happy, and he is happy, and thou art unwilling in the meane time to labour, where and how God hath appointed thee. These are none but gadding, wandering desires: better is the *sight of the eyes then the wandring of the desire*, Eccl. 6. 9. thy desires *wander* abroad to a roming company of

of *wisbes*, but thou wilt not observe that which God gives thee to see; thus much of the third objection, drawn from desire.

The fourth Objection.

Thou resolvest and hast good purposes, but oh thou canst not performe them.

3 Object.
answered.

I answer thee, doe but consider what thy purpose is, and thou shalt see how thou art cozened; these purposes thou speak'st of are onely *voluntates de futuro*. I will hereafter looke to it better then I have done heretofore. Hereafter I will, I purpose, that is hereafter I will; alas: this will for hereafter is no will.

First, because its onely to shuffell off the willing for the present. Now the heart is unwilling to obey, and therefore it puts off the Commandment to hereafter, not for any such desire that it hath to doe it hereafter, but only because it is unwilling to doe it for the present. Like a man that is unwilling to lend, I'll lend you hereafter sayes he, say not unto thy Neighbour goe and come againe, and to morrow I will give thee, when thou hast it by thee, Pro. 3. 28. his purpose to lend him to morrow, was only because he would shuffell off the lending to day. And therefore this purpose of willing hereafter, is no will at all, but onely to shuffell off the willing for the present. Thou hast the opportunity by thee, why dost thou not take it? thou hast the temptation by thee, why dost thou not resist it? dost thou say thou hast a will for hereafter, that is but a gull, that thou mayest not will for the present.

Secondly, this will for hereafter is no will, because it goes without Gods; no will can goe without God. Gods will is now, he would have thee now and thou wilt not; thou wilt hereafter, but then may be he will not. He that will not when he may, when he will he shall have nay; afterwards thou wouldst faine be converted, and pardoned, &c. Lord open to me, nay but O man, when I would thou wouldst

wouldst not; now thou wouldst, but I will not, thy will is for hereafter goes, without Gods, and therefore is no will.

Thirdly, thy will for hereafter is no will, because thou shalt misse those suppositions that thou wiltst upon.

First, Thou supposist thou shalt have fewer temptations hereafter. O when these troubles are over, and these temptations are over, I will; nay but O man when these are all over, new ones will come. And if the temptations for the present be a hinderance, some temptation or other as bad thou shalt meet with, that shall hinder thee hereafter much more, and therefore this supposition is false.

Secondly, thou supposist thou shalt be fitter hereafter; but *qui non est hodie cras minus aptus erit*, if thou beest not fit now, much lesse wilt thou be afterwards, thou'lt be softer and unfitter; like meat, the longer it is kept, the unfitter tis to be eaten, and therefore this supposition is false too.

Fourthly, thy will for hereafter is no will, but a mockery. *Antiquus & Novus, Antiquus I will give, this is not good in mens Laves, much lesse in Gods. Dabo, I will give, this is no gift, sayes the Law. So respiscam, I will repent, this is no repentance, sayes God; thus you see this objection is nothing, never tell me of thy purposes, thy purposes, are willings for hereafter, and they are no wills at all.*

The fifth Objection.

Thou endeavourest and labourst to serve God and to be saved.

I answer thee, Alas; Is this to labour for grace and for Heaven, when thou labourst so idly? as God said of that fasting; so may I say of thy labour; Is this the fast that I have chosen? to afflict a mans selfe for a day? So is this the labour that I have chosen? To labour so as thou labourst? but I need not to insist on this plea, thy conscience is able to answer it. Thou labourst thy conscience knows well enough thou art lazy, thou dost not labour for holiness; so then thine impenitency is wilfull, and thy dam

5 Object.
answered.

damnation wilfull, and the ruine wilfull.

To conclude then, understand all that you will not heare and obey.

First, that your destruction is from your self, you cannot cast it upon God: he offers you the means to escape it, and you will not, *Hos. 13. 9.*

Secondly, your destruction is not just, you cannot alledge severity or cruelty, no, your selves are cruell ones. You judge your own selves unto Hell. The Lord presseth the Gospel of grace upon you and you put it off, *Act. 13. 46.*

Thirdly, your destruction is inexcusable, you have nothing to excuse you; God hath taken away all cloaks of excuses, he hath offered you saving knowledge and you would not; a Christ and you would not: good motions, counsels, threatenings, and you would not. Your mouthes are quite stopped when you perish. *Matth. 22. 12.*

Fourthly, your destruction is unavoidable, if you would have relented and yielded, there might have been hope, but you would not. You have hardened your necks, and what's that but a will not? Therefore you shall be destroyed without remedy, *Prov. 29. 1.*

Fifthly, your destruction is pittlesse; what eye can pity you? Will, will have will, though Will will have woe, as we say; not God, nor Angels, nor Saints, no eye can pity you. If the thiefe will steale and will to the Gallowes, let him goe; he is no object of pity; as we say of a wilfull man, no tale can tune him to take heed, so no means can tune you to take heed; and therefore when you rue it, you cannot be pittied.

Sixthly, your destruction is grievous; of all plagues, none will free more, then those which one hath wilfully puled on himselfe. You'll one day gnash your own teeth, curse your own will, banne your own hearts; woe is me, I am under the rod, and my selfe gathered it; in Hell, and my selfe kindled it. I might have prevented it, but I would not.

Now follows Application.

Vse 1.

Learne instruction then, lest ye perish wilfully; re-
forme as much as you may, downe with all your disor-
ders, stumbling blocks of iniquities, and all the Idols of
your hearts, and cast them into the brooke Kidron. Set up
good courses as much as you may; use all the meanes to
salvation as humbly as you may; let not any family be
without the due worship of God in it. Fathers, suffer
not sinne on your children, nor Masters on your ser-
vants; lie not, sweare not, covet not, omit not the exer-
cises of hope, lest ye justly, inexcusably, unavoydably,
pittilesly perish, and so reproach your own wills for ever in
Tophet; as David then said unto Solomon, after he had set
him busineses to doe, arise therefore and be doing; and the
Lord be with thee, sayes he, 1 Chron. 22. 16. So I may say
to you, arise and be doing; up, set about it, use no excu-
ses, humble your selves before God, see your misery and
bewaile it, and the Lord be with you.

Note.

BUt may be you will say, this Doctrine is Pelagia-
nisme, or Arminianisme, at least. Nay then, let me
tell you 'tis Arminianisme to hold the contrary. You make
your wills to be your own, and free for to will, that say your will
is to repent, but you cannot. And if God should give you a
passe, ye professe your selves to be of the Pelagian heresie,
if God should give you a power, you would adde the
will. To passe over this, and so to goe on.

1 Vse.

For Instru-
ction.

Thou canst
never be hum-
bled unlesse
thou believe
this truth.

1 Excuse.

Except the believe of this truth doe sinke into thy
heart, thou canst never soundly be humbled; if thou
shouldst say, Lord I would faine have repented all this
while, but I could not, thou never soundly wert hum-
bled: *a man is never humbled as long as he excuses himselfe;*
thou sayest, I would be holier, I would pray better, and
I would reforme more, but I cannot; this is to fall to
excuses, and not to be humbled; For,

First, thou excuseth thy selfe for all transgressions besides
origi-

originall. A man must be humbled for his actual sinnes as well as originall, and count himselfe inexcusable for one as well as tother. But thou pitchest all thy humiliation upon thy *Apostacy in Adam*, if now thou pleadest *a cannot*. Lord, I confesse I was conceived in sinne, but now I cannot doe with all; I cannot doe otherwise though I would never so faine. I cannot but drinke now and then, and be drunke, I cannot but rap out an Oath now and then in my hast, &c. I confesse I brought this *cannot upon me in the loynes of Adam*; but upon the supposall of that dost thou bid me give over my sinnes? *I cannot; this is not to be humbled, but to fall to excuses.* Its true, actual corruption which naturally flowes from originall, requires that one and selfe same humiliation that originall does. But otherwise thou must be humbled with a new humiliati- on for thine actual transgressions, or else thou art not humbled but pleadst excuses. *David humbles* himselfe for both, with one humiliation for the one; *Psalm 51. 5.* with another for the other; *vers. 3.* But as long as thou pleadst on this faction, thou excusest thy selfe for thy actual sinnes, and never art humbled.

Nay secondly, thou excusest thy selfe for thy originall sinne too. Lord, I would bewisbont sin, but I cannot, if I would I could; belike then if it had beene thy case as it was *Adams*, thou wouldst not have eaten of the forbidden fruit. And therefore it was his fault and not thine, thou wouldst not have sinned if thou couldst have otherwise chused. And therefore thou excusest thy selfe for that too; for thou sayest thou wouldst not have sinned if thou hadst beene as he, he sinned when he might have otherwise chused; but thou wouldst not have done so. Thus thou excusest thy self for thine originall sinne too; And therefore thou canst not be humbled as long as thou pleadst thus; the truth is thou didst willingly sinne as well as *Adam*. God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions. *Eccles. 7. 29.* he speaketh of *Adams* being upright; God made *Adam* upright; he does not

2 Excuse.

Note.

say but *man bash* found out many inventions, as though it were his fault alone that was *created* upright. No, God made man upright, but *they*, marke, he casts the blame upon every man as well as *Adam*. But they have sought out many inventions. Thus we must be humbled for our originall corruption; but thou canst not be humbled as long as thou *pleadst* on this manner; no thou excusest thy selfe, and therefore thou wert never yet humbled.

3 Excuse.

Sinne of infirmity.

Nay thirdly, thou excusest thy selfe for every sinne, thou makest all thy *sinnes* to be nothing but *infirmities*, as though *Pauls* case were thine; the good which I would doe, that doe I not, and the evill which I would not doe, that doe I. I would be godlier then I am, but I cannot; and therefore thou makest all thy *sinnes* to be *infirmities*. What is a sinne of infirmity but a sinne the will protesteth against? thou sayest that thy will protesteth against every of thy *sinnes*, thou wouldst leave them, but thou canst not. See then how far thou art from sound humiliation; thy presumptuous *sinnes* are all nothing with thee, thy stubbornnesse nothing, and thy wilfulnesse nothing, no all thy *sinnes* are *infirmities*. Nay thou makest thy *sinnes* to be purely and only *infirmities*, *invincible infirmities*; *invincible infirmities* are the most excusable of all. Now when thou sayest thou stickest at a *Cannot*, thou makest thy *sinnes* not onely *infirmities*, but also *invincible infirmities*, such as thou canst not possibly avoid, thou wouldst faine avoid them but thou canst not; and therefore if thou goest this way to worke thou canst never be humbled.

4 Excuse.

Nay fourthly, Thou commendest thy selfe more then God: nay if ever God should inable thee and give thee power to be a new creature, thou makest thy selfe more beholding to thy selfe then to God. The will is more then the power; the will to believe and repent and convert, is more then the power; *Actus secundus est nobilior actu primo*. To be able to believe and to be able to repent and become a new Creature, these are but first acts. If God would helpe thee to these, thou sayest thou wouldst adde tother. Thou wouldst

wouldst believe and thou wouldst convert, and thou wouldst be a new creature; if God would give thee the power, thou wouldst adde the act. And therefore thou commendest thy selfe more then God; *for in morall power which have a further reference unto act, the act is more noble then the power.* The truth is, the will is better then the power of doing, and both is of God, and so the Apostle does shew it. Its God that worketh in you, speaking of the Saints; *Its God that worketh in you both the will and the deed,* Phil. 1. 13. marke, the will and the deed. First the will and then power to bring it into deed; the will is the primary blessing of God. And this is the reason *why a child of Gods estate is now better under Christ then it was before in Innocency, for then he had onely power if he would; and now both the will and the deed.* I say this is the truth, the will is more then the power; and therefore thou wert never humbled in thy life, that pleadst, O I would if I could; *thou makest thy selfe more beholding to selfe then to God, if God should ever convert thee, and therefore thou art not yet capable of conversion; why? thou art not yet humbled, but standst at proud termes with the Lord.*

Nay fifthly, *thou canst not so much as pray to God for a will, thou art so proud, that thou art conceited thou hast that already.* I have as good will to be good as any body else, but I cannot possibly doe as I would; So that *all thy prayers to God are a mockery.* The godly humble soule prayes as the ancient Church used to pray; *Lord give me a will to be good which my will is set against.* But thou canst not pray so, thou art a richer begger then so; for thou hadst a good will already thou thinkest. A man cannot pray for a thing the lack whereof he is not sensible thereof; *If any man lacke wisdom, let him aske it of God, James 1. 5.* He cannot pray for a thing if he doe not thinke that he lacks it, Nor thou for a will, for thou dost not thinke that thou lackst it. Nay, if God should convert thee thou canst not give him thankes for converting thee; for thy

Note.

5 Excuse.

*Apud Cassan-
drum, Domine
duc me quoniam
volo.*

will needed none; may be thou wilt pray for possibilities till thou hast them, and give him thanks for possibilities when thou hast them, but thou canst not pray for a will, for thou thinkest thou hast it; nor give him thanks for thy will for that is thine own. So that thou art Devilishly proud; never humbled since thou wert borne. Nay thou art so proud that all thy Prayers are but mockeries, and thy giving of thanks is a mockery. How canst thou looke that God should convert thee, when as thy proud heart tells God before-hand, thou wouldst not thank him if he should.

6 Excuse.

Carnall men
excuse them-
selves, and cast
the blame up-
on God.

Nay sixthly, Thou castest all the blame upon God; for its even just as if thou shouldst say, I cannot helpe it if God be not pleased to inable me, how can I helpe it? my will is as good as anothers, such and such are so forward and so Heavenly. God gives them the power; but my will God knowes is as good as theirs, I would faine doe as well as the best, but I cannot; O if God would inable me, I would. Obeloved, take heed of these conceits, for yee cast all the blame upon God; whereas the blame is in your selves, yee would not be inabled. I say yee cast all the blame upon God.

1 Demon.

First, because yee cast the blame upon nature, its my nature, and I cannot; I would, but its my nature and I cannot. Thou layest the blame upon thy Nature, and therefore thou castest the blame upon God for not helping thee to a better nature; it is God that justly determines mens natures. Ones nature is more cholerick, anothers more fearefull, anothers more lazy, anothers more lustfull. Dost thou lay the blame upon nature, my nature is more subject to choler, and wrath? Alas, thou layest blame upon God. For its he that disposeth of mens natures; and therefore, thou takest part with those wretches that saie, why hast thou made me thus? Rom. 9. 20. thou layest the blame upon God, I would not doe thus, but onely 'tis my nature, and I cannot helpe it. No. And wilt thou lay the blame upon God? No, no; this is thy nature and thou art contented with this nature.

Second

Secondly, *Thou dost cast the blame upon temptations*, it is my hard hap to fall upon temptations. I was tempted or I would not have done it; this is to cast the blame upon God too, for it is his providence to order temptations. Such and such temptations for one man, such and such for another, such now and such then. Its the providence of God that disposeth which and which temptations every man shall have. One shall have temptations to Pride, another temptations to Wrath, another to Revenge, another to Covetousnesse. Its true; *God tempteth no man, but he orders the temptations of men: Let no man say he is tempted of God, for God tempteth no man.* No, every man is tempted to sinne by his own luste. Thus thou would say if thou wert humbled; but thou layest the blame upon God; it was long of temptations that I did it. This is as if thou shouldst say 'twas long of God, that I did it, because 'twas Gods providence that suffered these temptations to be layd for thee.

2 Demon.

James 1. 13.

Thirdly, because thou *layest the blame upon the times*, the times are very bad. I would not goe in this fashion, but only that the times require it. I would be more given to fasting and repeating the Word, &c. I would willingly be more forward then I am, but the times are very bad; This is to lay the blame upon God too, for God setteth every mans time. If I had beene in Christs time, or Pauls time, or Queene Elizabeths time, I would have done thus and thus. Thou layest the blame upon God, for God setteth every mans time; When God from eternity made his common place-Booke of all the whole World, he appointed such and such to live first, such next, and such last: Such and such to live here, and such there; Such at Rochford, and such at London; so sayes the Apostle, *he hath made of one bloud all Nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the Earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations, A& 17. 26.* marke, he hath appointed the times, and the places. The times when they shall live, and the places where. God setteth mens times; and

3 Demon.

and therefore thou which layest the blame upon the times, layest the blame upon God.

4 Demon.

Fourthly, because thou layest the blame upon this Commandment, if it were any Commandment but this, I would doe it; But this I cannot doe; if it were any other injury but this, any disgrace but this, I would willingly put it up, but I cannot put up this; if it were any duty but this; I would doe any thing but this, but to root out all disorders out of my house, alas I cannot doe this, I cannot live, as good keepe no Inne at all, as not suffer men to call for what they would. I cannot doe this; *this is to cast the blame upon God too*, that he should make such a Commandment as this, he should have done wel to have made another Law, and penned another Gospell, and then I would have kept it: thou layest the blame upon God for it is God that made all these commandments, these are the commandments of the Lord, Deut. 6. 1. *The Lord made all the Commandments*, and this too, and therefore if thou layest the blame upon this, thou layest the blame upon God.

5 Demon.

Fifthly, because thou layest the blame upon ill fortune and bad lucke, it was my ill fortune to marry a shrew, and I cannot but fret and lie out of doores. Alas, marriages are made in heaven, and God hath decreed them, thus thou layest the blame upon God, 'twas my ill fortune to miscarry, to light upon such a companion, to be so over-taken as I was, I would willingly have had it to have beene otherwise, but I had not the lucke of it, and it fell out very unluckily; thus thou committest two evils, thou playest the Atheist in speaking of fortune, like them in the Prophet, *that prepared a table for fortune* as the word signifies, *Isay 65. 11*. I say thou committest two evils, one in calling it Fortune, the other, thou layest the blame upon God, for that which thou profoundly callest fortune and lucke, its *divine providence*, says Aristotle, *the very Heathen is able to tell is is God*, and the Scripture puts it for Gods providence; and therefore when thou

Note.

That which men call fortune, is Gods providence.

thou layest the blame upon ill fortune, thou layest the blame upon God, so that hence ye may see, that thou canst never be humbled as long as thou pleadst on this wise before God. I would very willingly, but I cannot: I say thou canst never be humbled, because this is to lay the blame upon God. *Indeed a child of God, that of unwilling is made willing, he may plead a cannot before Christ without laying the blame upon God.* Lord, I can't humble my proud heart, nor crucifie this bewitching lust of mine, Lord I am not able to doe it, I beseech thee to helpe me. I say a child of God that is sincerely willing to doe it, may plead a cannot before Christ; nay Christ his promise can no where be applied, but where the soule can truly plead a cannot. He giveth power to the faint, to him that hath no might I will increase strength, *Isay. 40. 29.* when the soule lies tugging and pulling at his heart and cannot pull it up, striving and endeavouring and using all holy meanes and cannot, its even faint with pulling and tugging at that which it cannot. As ye know twill make any man faint to be tugging at a milstone, which he cannot pull up. When the soule lies thus at a cannot, I will give power sayes Christ, though it have no strength. I will inable it: *a child of God that is willing, may pleade a cannot, without laying the blame upon God,* but then he humbles his soule for all his former will nots, nay for his too too many will nots for the present. But thou canst never be humbled while thou livest, if thou pleadst thus a cannot, because thou layest the blame upon God.

Nay sixthly, thou canst not be humbled because thou dost not onely lay the blame upon God for thy sinnes, but thou findest fault with all Gods proceedings; it is as if thou shouldest say, *why does he bid me repent, when he knows I cannot?* why does he yet complaine? *Rom 9 19.* he knowes that I cannot, why does he wooe me to doe that which I cannot? or promise me blessings if I doe, when he knowes that I cannot? why does he helpe me to more and more knowledge? he does but hurt me with know-

6 Demon.

ledge,

ledge, and make my finnes to be worse, which I cannot forsake. My finnes are now against knowledge, and Ministers tell me that is worse; this is all that I get by your preaching; say thou findest fault with all Gods corrections: why does he punish me for not doing of that which I cannot? thus thou art far from being humbled; the truth is, thou mightest get a great deal by knowledge, by exhortations, and reproofes, and corrections, but thou wilt not: is it not easier to leave a sinne when thou knowest it, then when thou art ignorant of it? to be moved when thou art exhorted, then when thou art not admonished at all? to forsake a sinfull course when once God hath embittered it to thy flesh by corrections, then when it was sweet? is it not easier to give over drunkenness, when thy excess is bitter to thy stomacke, then when it was pleasant? so it is with every other sinne, thou mightst get a great deal of God by every one of Gods dealings, but thou wilt not. *Why should yee be stricken any more? yee will revolve more and more, Esay. 1. 5.* Yee will sayes God, this is Gods language, he finds fault with thy *will*, but thou findest fault with his *will*; why does he smite me more and more, I cannot but revolt? I cannot doe as he would have me; may be thy lusts are more mannerly then to say thus; but this secret grumbling is in thee, if thou sayest that thou stickest at a cannot, and therefore thou canst not be humbled.

2 Vse.

Which discovers the hearts deceitfulness.

In the second place, if it be thus, the reason why thou dost not amend, is not because thou canst not, but because thou wilt not.

See here then the deceit of thy heart.

If God would give me grace, I would willingly doe any thing; this is nothing but the deceitfulness of thy heart, which is deceitfull above all things. For thy heart does but here lye unto God; I would very faine, if God would enable me; thou lyest; God knowes it is not so? like
the

Jer. 17. 9.

the wilfull Lewes, they would be Gods people, they would stay themselves upon God; God tels them in effect they lyed, *I knew thou wert obstinate, and thy necke is an iron sinew, and thy brow brasse. I say 48.4.* wouldest thou believe me? no, no, I know thou art obstinate and will not; so God knowes thou art obstinate. I cannot see this is a sinne to say faith and troth, I cannot see 'tis a sinne not to pray daily in my family, not to repeate the sermon every Sabbath: If I could see it were a sinne I would mend it; no no, thou lyeest to God, thou art obstinate and thou wouldest not have it a sinne, and thou wilt not believe it, and if thou didst know it to be one, thou wouldest not reforme it.

Secondly, hereby thou dodgest with God and thou temptest the Lord. If God would give me grace I would doe it; this is nothing but dallying and trilling with the Lord; for why dost thou not set about it and try every day what thou canst doe? If God would but quicken me and perswade me, and compell me, and inable me, I would doe it. Alas thou dodgest with with God as the people in the Gospell, if he will come downe from the Crosse we will believe in him, *Mat. 27.42.* they had no will to believe in him, this was nothing but dodging: *Christ had done enough* for them to make them believe, if they had any such will, and this was nothing but a pretence of their deceitfull heart.

Thirdly, hereby thou shufflest off the word, when thou hast heard it, God give me grace to do so as he hath taught me this day, alas I cannot my selfe, God give me grace, and so shufflest it off, and think'it no more of it: like (those you call) godfathers in some places, as soon as ever they are charged at the Font to looke to the child, and see him brought up in religion, they presently goe and put off the charge ... the Father, I pray you take the charge upon you: so thou layest the charge at Gods doore, when God gives thee any duty in charge, thou layest it at his doore, as though it stuck there, and there thou let-

test it lye, not setting about it to doe it ; God give me grace, *repentance is his gift*, and if he doe not give it, I cannot repent, I would but I cannot, if he doe not give it: the speech is very good and becomes a godly soule that makes conscience of the meanes to say it, but this is thy shuffling to lay it at Gods doore, as though it stuck there; God tels thee plainly it does not sticke at him, he would have all to come unto repentance, 2. Pet. 3 9. but thou wilt not come, and this is the deceit of thy heart to shuffle it from thee.

Vse 3.

In the third place, is it so, that the reason why thou dost not amend, is not because thou canst not, but onely because thou wilt not ?

Oh then my Brethren learne to be humbled.

3 Vse.

Engage to humiliation.

This points calls for *great humiliation*.

First, here lies especially the *pride of the heart*, not in *mens cannots*, but their *will nots*; when a soule does whatsoever it can, reformes as much as it can, uses at many meanes as it can, and as often as it can, this is not a *proud heart*: but a *proud heart* is that especially which sticketh at a *will not*. If ye will not heare, *my soule shall weepe in secret places for your pride*, Jer. 13. 17. marke, for your *pride*, if you *will not*, he does not say if you cannot, my soule shall weepe for your pride, if ye sticke at a cannot, but if yee sticke at a *will not*; *doe not thinke this point does lift up mens wills*, no, this point does as much beat at the humbling of the will, as any point under heaven; for here lies all the *pride of the will*, and therefore here ye must be humbled.

Secondly, here lies especially the *hardning of the heart*: when a man stickes at a cannot, he does not more and more harden his heart, but onely stickes at the same hardness he had. Beloved, *thou dost then harden thy heart when thou wilt not obey*, and therefore here's most need of thy humbling, to be humbled for thy *will-nots*; its said of Pha-

Pharaoh he *hardned his heart*, *Exod. 9 34.* what followes? He would not let the children of *Israel* goe: thy will nots these are they that harden thy heart; doest thou complaine of the hardnesse of thy heart? O goe and humble thy soule for thy will nots, these are the hardnesse of thy heart, nay let me tell thee, thou hast no *hardnesse of heart*, no more then an *infant* or a babe, but onely *that which thy will nots have made thee*, and therefore thou hast great reason to be humbled for thy will nots.

Thirdly, here lies especially the *stubbornnesse of the heart*; when a child that is commanded by his Parent to obey sticks at a cannot, he obeyes as farre as he can, but onely he sticks at a cannot, he is not *stubborne*; *stubbornnesse is but when one sticks at a will not*; if a man have a *stubborne sonne* which will not obey the voice of his Father, *Dent. 21. 18.* so here lies especially the stubbornnesse of thy heart, and therefore here's most humiliation required.

Fourthly, here lies the greatest *despisings of the Commandements of God*: authoritie is never so much despised as when men will not submit to it: a *father's despised* when a sonne will not heare him; and a *master's despised* when his servant will not doe as he bids him; nay *commandment cannot be despised but by will nots*, it may be omitted, and not obeyed by cannots, but it cannot be despised but by will nots; if ye shall *despise my statutes*, so that ye will not doe all my *Commandements*, &c. *Levit. 16. 15.* O what infinite reason hast thou to be humbled, that despisest the Lord? He cannot endure that men should despise him; he can put up any other wrong rather then this, that men should despise him: but to be sleighted and despised he will not, cannot endure it. *For three transgressions of Judah, and for foure I will not turne away the punishment thereof, because they have despised the law of the Lord, Amos 2. 4.* he will not turne away the punishment of this sinne, when men doe despise him; what infinite neede then hast thou to be humbled under thy will not, thou despisest the commandment.

4 Vse.
To quicken
the thankful-
nesse of the
godly.

Note.

Here's a word to you *that are godly*, O what mercy hath the Lord shewed to you, and how ought you to be thankfull ! never was there such mercy as this to shew mercy *to the wilful* : O woefull soule, be his misery never so great, hee's not the fit object of mercy ; for *though misery be mercies object, yet joyn'd with wilfulness its not to be pitied* : you have bene as wilfull as any, all cut out of the same rocke ; the Lord hath not onely helpt you to mercy and grace, but also, to a will to take it. When Lot was unwilling to goe out of Sodom, the Lord tooke him by the arme, and carried him perforce ; now see how the Text expresse it : the Angels tooke hold of his band, the Lord being mercifull unto him, and they brought him forth, Gen. 19, 16. As if he should say, would you faine stay ? you shall not ; would you stand lingring to be consumed with fire and brimstone ? you shall not : the Lord was mercifull to him *whether he would or no*. So you had no mercy on your selves, but the Lord had ; yee were wilfull against mercy, and the Lord fastned mercy on you, whether you would or no, he commanded his loving kindnesse, Psal. 42. 8. goe mercy and seize on them, goe loving kindnesse, and make them take yee ; not as though God converted you against your wills : for when he converted you, your unwillingnesse was taken away ; but he made you of *unwilling, willing*. Oh the infinite mercy of God, and the infinite cause you have to be thankfull.

5 Vse.
A seasonable
Item to all re-
bellious spirits.

In the fifth place, to you that stand out in your wilfullnesse still ; is it so that ye sticke at a will not ? then be exhorted to be much in abasing your selves before the Lord : your stoutnesse is intollerable, that you dare set up the briars and thornes against God in battle ; downe with them and be wise : you harden your own hearts, and disable your selves more and more for repenting of it ; ye despise the Lords name by the stubbornnesse of your froward will, you can never be saved except your wills stoop : before Christ will meddle with a soule, hee'l first aske, art thou willing ? as he ask'd the blind man,

man, *what wilt thou that I doe unto thee?* Lord saies he that I may receive my sight, *Luk. 18. 41.* So the first question he puts to thee is, *what wilt thou?* Lord that I may be humble, converted, purged: if thou bee'st willfull, though he never take thee in hand, but leave thee to thy selfe, he will be justified in thine eternall confusion.

Psal 81. 11.

Consider.

First, *Is it not enough that thou hast willingly fallen in Adam, but thou must willingly stand out againe?* God now calls thee to meanes of grace, thou hast stood out once already and wilt thou be wilfull to stand out againe? as *Israel*, though in a mistake, said to their brethren, *is the iniquity of Peor too little for us; from the which we are not cleansed to this day? but that yee must turne away this day too?* *Josh. 22. 17.* So may I say, is your willing apostacy in *Adam* too little for you, from the which yee are not cleansed to this day? but ye must willingly stand out against *Christ* too?

Secondly, consider the very Saints of God that have not halfe so many will noss as you, that sicke more truly at a cannot; I would doe the good but I cannot. I say the very Saints of God they labour to humble themselves every day: *O wretched man that I am* sayes *Paul, Rom. 7. 24.* does *Paul* cry out, *Oh wretched man that I am?* he was a Saint of God, and heire of heaven, and sure of blisse; does he cry out of himselfe, that he was wretched? oh what infinite need then hast thou to be humbled! Thou art yet a child of hell, and heire of damnation, wilfull in thy sinnes to this houre, *Oh wretched man that I am?*

Thirdly, consider the more shamefull ones sinne is, the more reason to be humbled; thy sinne is most shamefull; for thou corruptest thy selfe, they have corrupted themselves, *Deut. 32. 5.* so thou corruptest thy selfe, thy will corrupteth it selfe.

Nay fourthly, consider *thou's* no greater shame then to make away ones selfe; thou destroyest thy selfe; *Oh Israel thou hast destroy'd thy selfe.* More credit to be stab'd by the high way, nay more credit to be hanged on a *Patibulum*

Hos. 13. 5.

Wilfull disobedience is
soule-murder.
1 Sam. 12.13.

as a *Malefactor*, then to murder ones selfe. Put him into a hole, drive a stake through his body, set a Monument of shame on him. (I doe not know whether it be so among you, but) it is so in some places, when a man murders himselfe. So thou dost murder thy selfe, nay more *thy best selfe; thou makest away thy soule*. Be vext then with thy wicked will, what a madde man am I? I will have this lust, and I will have that passion, like the people, *we will have a King over us*; no sayes *Samuel*, the Lord your God, is your King; nay but we will have a King. So thou art wilfull, and thou wilt doe thus; O doe not doe it, the Lord hath forbidden thee? Nay but I will doe it. Thus thou art wilfull, and thou wilt to Hell; vex thine own heart with this. When a wilfull *Malefactor*, comes afterwards to know that if he had not becne wilfull the judge would have saved him, Oh how will it vex him? he could even rend his own haire and teare his own flesh, what a madde man was I! I forsooke mine own Clergy, so thou forsakest thine own Clergy, thine own mercy; *they that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy*. *Jonah. 2.8.* vex thine own heart with it, say I have forsaken mine own mercy.

Fifthly, consider if you would but vex your own soules with this serious consideration, it would make you kicke your lust under foote, and cry out upon them, out upon you, get ye hence, as they cryed out upon their Idols, *Eisy 30.22.* get ye hence, get ye hence; here is no entertainment for you from henceforth. I forsake mine own mercy as long as I keep you.

H. wing shewed you that except your belife of this point be rooted in your hearts, yee can never be humbled.

First, because hereby you excuse your selves from all your transgressions besides original.

Nay secondly, yee excuse your selves for your original sin 2.10.

Nay thirdly, you make all your sinnes to be nothing but infirmities, invincible infirmities.

Nay

Nay fourthly, you commend your selves more then God.
 Nay fifthly, you block up the way to the throne of grace.
 Nay sixthly, you cast all the blame upon God.
 First, because you lay the blame upon nature.
 Secondly, because you cast the blame upon temptations.
 Thirdly, because you lay the blame on the times.
 Fourthly, because you lay the blame upon the commandment.

Nay seventhly, you finde fault with all the dealings of God.

Oh take heed then of these base pleas and pretences: for That I may interpose foure or five particulars unnam'd.

First, this same pleading is the cause why you are lazy and idle in the use of the meanes : namely because yee suffer your hearts to plead, *Oh we cannot doe thus*. We cannot beat downe this evill ; why did the unjust Steward refuse honest labour to worke for his living, *I cannot digge sayes he*, Luke 16.3. therefore he refused to labour ; so this is the cause why ye pray no more, and reforme no more, &c. Yee set your hearts thus to pleade, *I cannot doe it* ; This is the reason why ye are backward to labour ; how know ye what may be done if ye would buckle I to labour ? but alas, *I cannot doe it* say you ; and therefore ye are dead, and dull, and sluggish to every good Ordinance. Shake off these lazy hearted pleas, otherwise yee'l never buckle to labour.

Secondly, this same pleading brings up an ill report upon piety and godlinesse ; generally men thinke religion is so irksome, and holinesse is impossible. We cannot be Saints, and we are not able to be so holy ; these pleas bring an evill report on Religion. Like the spies that brought an evill report upon Canaan, Num. 13.23. What sayes the Text in the verse going before ? we be not able to get it, say they, verse 31. this made the rest of the people thinke hardly of their going into Canaan ; they generally thought it was to very little end. Oh they were not able

to

to winne it; so ye bring an evill report upon the *Heavenly Canaan*, the flesh is too strong, the divell too strong, temptations too strong, and its impossible to grapple with them all, we are not able to get mastery. I say this brings up an evill report on Religion, ye discourage one another. I cannot get quickning, and I cannot deny my selfe. Yee bring up an evill report upon these duties, and ye are guilty of the evill report that goes up and down.

Thirdly, this same *pleading is a murmuring against God. q.d. why does God give me such Commandements, that I cannot observe?* Why does he charge me to root out a lust that I cannot root out? this is to murmur against God. Like those *murmuring Disciples in the Gospell*, when they were told they must feed upon Christ, and as the *body feeds upon meate, so your soules must feede upon Christ*, this is a hard saying, who can heare it say they? *Christ construed this speech to be murmuring, Joh. 6. 60 61.* We cannot doe this, and this is so hard we are not able to do it. The Text sayes it was murmuring, *when Jesus knew in himselfe that his Disciples murmured at it; that pleading of a cannot was a murmuring.* So when thou grumblest on this manner I cannot walke thus, I cannot believe thus, &c. this is to murmur against God, nay this will bring thee to *Apostacy at last*, if thou suffer thy heart to plead thus. May be now thou art a forward professor, yet beest thou never so forward and favourest any lust, and I cannot give it over, I cannot roote it out, &c. I say this will breake thy neck at the last, if thou dost not looke to it. So it was with those forenamed Disciples, they were very forward Professors, for they were the Disciples of Christ sayes the Text; yet those Disciples, *they went away back and walked no more with Christ*, vers. 66. their pleading of their cannots, drove them to Apostacy; they went away back. So thou wilt goe away back, and fall into *apostacy* if thou suffer thy heart to stand *pleading of cannots in this manner.*

Fourthly, this is the *sawfiest excuse of all excuses*, many sinners

Sinners excuse their own selves but there is more *mannerliness* in all their excuses; I pray thee have me excused sayes one. I have bought five yoke of Oxen, and I pray thee have me excused; sayes the other, I have bought a purchase, I pray thee have me excused. These though wretched excusers and turned out from all mercy; yet they were somewhat more *mannerly*; but I cannot come, sayest thou; I have married a Wife, and I cannot come; Luke 14. 20. this is a most sly excuse, thou tellest Christ in plaine termes, I cannot come, *q. d.* ye may even save your labour to invite, for this is short and long, as we say, I cannot come. This I put in only by the by.

I shewed you some of the deceits of the heart in pleading these cannots.

First, How it *lies unto God*.

Secondly, how it *dallies with God*.

Thirdly, how *hereby it puts off the word*.

And then I shewed you the strong reason we have to be humbled under these will nots.

First, because here chiefly *lies the pride of the heart, not in mens Cannots, but in their will-nots*; Jer. 13. 17.

Secondly, here lies chiefly *the hardning of the heart*, Exod. 9. 34. 35.

Thirdly, here lies chiefly *the stubbornesse of the heart*, Deut. 2 1. 18.

Fourthly, here lies chiefly *the greatest despising of the Commandements of God*, Levit. 29. 15.

Fifthly, now to goe on, here lies the reason why Divines say that *the conversion of a sinner is a harder worke then the Creation of Heaven and Earth*; for thus they doe reason. When God created Heaven and Earth, he had nothing to resist him; as he had nothing to helpe him, (he made all of nothing) so he had nothing to resist him. There was but *one difficulty* in the creation of Heaven and Earth; but in the conversion of a sinner there be *two difficulties*.

First, here is the *same difficulty that was in creation, for*

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God

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God makes a *Convert* of nothing; he had nothing to helpe him, not one thought, not one desire, not one good inclination; and therefore the Scripture calls it a *new creation*; whosoever is in Christ is a *new creature*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. that is, is created a new. And therefore, there was nothing preexistent, *no not one thought, all the thoughts of men are onely evill, and that continually.* So there is the same difficulty, that was in the Creation of Heaven and Earth; and then

Secondly, there is another difficulty more then there was in the Creation; for as there was nothing preexistent to helpe, so there was nothing to resist. But here is something to resist, the will it resisteth; now the Cannots does not resist. No, the bestowing of the new power is no more then another Creation. But the changing of the will is more then another Creation; for the will it resisteth, yea and it sets all the soule a resisting. Carnall reason resisteth, carnall desires they resist, all the soule it resisteth; and the greatest resistance of all is the resistance of the will; for the will is the utmost strength of the soule. And therefore here lies the infinite difficulty of the conversion of a sinner, namely in the turning of the will, it requireth more power, then was required to the creation of Heaven and Earth. God put himselfe forth more when he converteth a sinner, then when he created a World; and therefore the Scripture calles the day of conversion of mens wills, the day of his power. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. Psal. 110. 3. In the day of thy power; marke, its called a day of Gods power, when he converteth a people to be willing. Why? because the will did resist him; nay God had his own selfe to resist him, anger steps in his way to resist him. Convert him not Lord, his wilfulness hath anger'd thee; Justice stept in to resist him, save him not Lord, his finnes have dishonoured thee. Nay, he had his mercy to resist him; mercy steps in, Lord he hath abused me, save him not. Indeed had a sinner yielded as soone as he sinned, mercy would not resist him; but mercy had beene

Note.

beene dealing with him, and he abused all mercy. And therefore he had mercy to resist, nay and wisdom one would thinke to resist too, *what a wilfull foole? pitty him not Lord.* There is no reason he should be pitied, if he will perish let him perish. *I say in the conversion of a sinner, as there was nothing to assist him, so there was all to resist.* The will does resist him, nay God had himselfe, as I may so speake to resist him; yea, and mercy to resist him; it was not so in the Creation of Heaven and Earth. *The creature had never provoked God not to create it; but the sinner hath provoked God never to convert him,* so that now God must have power over himselfe if he meane to convert him. Oh then what infinite reason hast thou to be humbled; thou resistest God, as Stephen told the Jewes; *you have alwayes resisted the Holy Ghost, Acts 7. 51.* so thou hast resisted Gods spirit, yea, thy will does resist him, and that is the strongest thing to resist in the World. His word comes to convert thee, and thou dost resist his motions, his mercies, his corrections, his ordinances, and all holy meanes to convert thee, thou dost resist them; nay his spirit contendeth within thee, and thou dost resist him.

I gave you five things to consider, *what it is to sticke at your will nots.* I beseech you consider yet further,

First, *If you will not, Gods Admonitions have discharged their duties, and have left your blood on your own heads,* they can goe no further if you will not: the Groome can but carry the Steed unto watering as we say, if he will not drinke he cannot helpe it; so they can't helpe it, your blood lies upon you own heads, they have discharged their duties. When *Abrahams servants objected,* and how if the woman will not? *Abraham he answers,* if the woman will not be willing, *then thou shalt be cleare from my oath. Gen. 24. 8.* So Lord, how if they will not? may we say, nay if they will not, let them chuse, thou art cleare; the Lord hath sworne us to preach, and teach, and exhort; and reprove; and invite you to grace; but if we doe so, and you will not, we can't helpe it, *your blood is on*

Note.

your own heads ; we have discharged our oath and our duty, we would be glad that you would ; but if now you will not, we have discharged our duties. Nay,

Secondly, if you will not, the Gospell hath delivered its errand, ye are guilty of your own everlasting perdition ; the Gospell hath delivered its message, and this is the message. Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely, Revelat. 2. 2. 17. This message hath been delivered to you often ; its the last exhortation in the whole Bible : like one in the evening of the market, he is even about to take downe his standing ; I have told you my lowest price, if you will have it, take it ; if not, chuse, I must be gone. So this is the end of Gods booke ; as if he should say, I am even a closing up my booke, speake quickly, if ye will, come, and welcome ; but if not I am gone. If yet you will not, you will not submit ; nay but you will have your lusts, and your stomachs will not come downe, you will not stirre a jot beyond your painted civility and formality ; you will not be more conscionable then you have been, nor frequent holy duties more then you have done : nor get more holinesse then you have done, then if Will will have will, Will must winne woe ; the Gospell hath delivered its message.

Nay thirdly, if you will not : the bloud of Jesus Christ hath done that it came for : it came to tender you mercy upon very easie termes ; to offer you grace and pardon, and salvation and Heaven, and all upon very free cost. If you had rather that sinne should be your master, then that Christ should be your master ; if you will not hearken and obey, I say the bloud of Christ hath done that which it came for : and your soules shall know ye shall be worse offered ; you have knowledge of the truth, Christ hath offered you very faire, and you cannot but know it, and yet you will not submit to it ; assure your selves you shall be worse offered : for next to your will not, comes Christ leaving you desolate. As Christ seld Jerusalem, I would, but you would not ; what followes ? Behold your house is left unto you desolate,

solate, Mat. 23. 37, 38. So Christ would, and you would not; he hath given you gracious offers, but you will not: therefore you may look to be worse offered; your soules to be desolate.

Nay fourthly, *If you will not, yee murder your own soules*; when a man hath murdred himselfe, the Coroner comes and he does sit on him, and he enquires and he examines, and who hath murdered this man? and when he finds that it was himselfe that did murder him, so he concludes, and that man is branded for murdering of himselfe; so you murder your own soules. The *Jewes their soules were all murdred*; well, when the Coroner sate on them, he concluded they had murdred themselves: *O Israel thou hast destroyed thy selfe*, Hos. 13. 9. So if the Coroner sit on thee, its most certaine he shall finde thou hast murdred thine own selfe; O what a company of you is there, your soules are quite murdred; one in one sinne, another in another; who hath murdred these men? *not God, he was ready to helpe them*: not the Minister, he did use all meanes to save them; he hath not been wanting to reach them and exhort them. No, your own selves have murdred your selves; *you would be carnall, and you would be proud, and you would not lie downe to the word*: when the Coroner sits on you he must necessarily conclude, you have murdred your selves; your own wills have condemned you.

You remember what exhortations we gave you. As ever, you regard mercy to humble your soules, we told you the first question Christ asks, is, *if yee be willing*, as he ask'd the blind man, *what wilt thou?* Luke 18. 41. if thou beest not willing, hee'l never take thee in hand: *the subjects of the kingdome of grace must be willing*. Christ will never come into a soule, where his will may be affronted by another; *Heaven cannot beare two sunnes, nor one heart two wills*: if thy will be not crucified, and made agreeable to Christs, Christ cannot dwell in thy heart; there would be two contrary wills in one heart; and this can-

Caelum non patitur duos soles.

not

not be if Christ come ; he will have these and these lusts turned away, which thou wouldst faine keepe ; he will haue this done and that done , and thou wilt not : *two contrary wills can never stand together.* No , if thy will be contrary to Christ , Christs will , will be contrary to thine ; if thy will be to doe that which will offend him , his Will will be to doe that which will vex thee ; *If yee will w^{ill}ke contrary to me , I will also walke contrary to you,* *Levit. 26. 23. 24.* No, no, your wills they must bow , or Christ will not take you in hand ; *the will is the generall presupposition of all the whole Gospell* : the summe of the whole Gospell is this, to deny a mans selfe, and to take up Christs crosse and to follow him ; now see the will is presupposed as ready ; if any man will come after me, let him deny himselfe, &c. *Luke 9. 23.* ne're a commandment of the Gospell, ne're a promise, ne're an one passage but presupposes the Will ; Christ will not open his mouth except thy will be brought downe.

Note.

An awaking
hint, for the
redeemed of
the Lord.

A few words to you that *are the redeemed of the Lord,* and so I'll make a conclusion of all. I pray God smite home this point into your hearts; for though your wills be tamed and subdued in regard of the wicked , you doe not stand out as they doe, neverthelesse observe you this point: *there's many a Canaanite that remaines still in our bosomes, that we may thanke our own wills, for not rooting out.* We doe not put our selves forth so much as we might, nor labour in the Lord so seriously as we might, not walk so close as we might ; oh beloved, these same will *nots doe us all the mischief that ever is done us.* For

Note.

First, *We never sinne against Gospell but onely upon will nots ; indeed we sinne against the law in every of our can- nots,* but we never sinne against the Gospell, but onely in our will nots. The Gospell requires nothing of a believer, but that which it *gives him,* and therefore we never sinne *against the Gospell, but onely in our will nots* : this is the voice of the Gospell, *in vs* *Δίς* if any man will, *Iohn. 7. 17.* Oh then let us stirre up our selves, shall we sinne a- gainst

gainst Gospell? and sinne against mercy.

Secondly, *We can never displease God but onely upon wil nots.* I speake onely upon Gods people; we can never staine our acceptance with God, but onely in our will nots; *though we cannot but sinne in our prayers,* but sinne in our duties, but sin in every thing that we doe: yet this does not staine our acceptance with God, nor blemish it one whit, *when God hath our wills*: for if there be a willing minde, it is accepted according to that which a man hath, and not according to that which a man hath not, 2 Cor. 8. 12. But when God would have us mend this, and we will not; and reforme that and we will not; we let security and sloth breake into our wills here and here onely doe we displease our good God, this is a maine thing to consider; is there but one thing wherein we may displease God, and shall we not take heed of that?

Thirdly, *Conscience can never condemne us but onely upon wil nots*; when a child of God sinnes, and he cannot otherwise choose, his conscience can never condemne him. A child of Gods cannot, be they never so many, nay if they were millions more then they are, they never hinder sincerity; sincerity is rooted onely in the will, it is *our wil not that is the breach of sincerity*, and therefore here only the conscience condemnes; does our conscience reproach us in our wayes? let us thanke our *wil nots* for this; have we little peace? it is because of the *rebellion of our wil nots*. Ah, ah, this is an infinite evill, for it hinders our comforts, it hinders our boldnesse of accessse to the throne of Gods grace; it hinders our patience, and every good duty, this does us infinite hurt; it stabbes to the heart, and wounds our very soule, when our conscience affordeth little peace, O it hinders very grievously; all this as long of our *wil nots*, because we will not be so carefull and so circumspect as we might.

Fourthly, *God can never be angry with us but onely upon wil nots*; its true as long as a man is not in Christ, all the score stands; and Gods is angry for all; but God is an-

gry

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gry for nothing but *will nots* in his children, as Nebemias sayes of Gods people in Iudah, they would not beare, therefore God gave them up into the hand of the people of the land, Nehem 9 30. God is not angry with his people for cannots, but onely for their *will nots*; it is for our *will nots* that God does not so goe out with our Ministers, nor so quicken his word to your hearts. It is for our *will nots* that he threatens our land, and beginnes to abridge us of our spiritual food, and shewes ominous signes of his departing away from us, and are we not even sicke unto death for these *Will nots*? We complaine of our deadnesse, and what trow we is the cause, but our *will nots*? we complaine of our corruptions and of the leanenesse of our soules, and whom may we thanke, but our *will nots*? we might grow more then we doe, what lets us, but our *will nots*? What makes some of us goe downe the winde? as we say; but because we will not stand on our guards. These, these, brethren, these *will nots* of ours, are the reason why God is provoked against us. Oh let us put forth our selves, and shake off these *will nots*, least anger breake out, and there be no remedy; for ones crooked servant to be stubborne, it is but his kinde: but for ones childe to be stubborne, this angers the father indeed.

FINIS.

